AMATEUR PHILOSOPHER

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The amateur philosopher.

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THE AMATEUR PHILOSOPHER

BY

CARL H. GRABO

NEW YORK
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1917

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PREFACE

It is not easy to trace the growth of spiritual beliefs, which like other living things emerge from obscure origins and develop slowly and imperceptibly until in some moment of awareness we find on our hands a sturdy crop of affirmations and negations of whose existence we had not before taken thought. Certain dramatic moments may be memorable, such as religious conversion or some impulsive act that surprised us upon reflection, causing us to speculate upon the nature of our unformulated beliefs, which, though governing conduct, had never before been brought to the surface of consciousness and rationalized. But for the most part we do not easily recall the steps of our spiritual growth. Only the dissimilarity of our old and our present beliefs is manifest. The process of development itself eludes dissection and analysis.

Yet I find that the attempt at analysis, the comparison of my beliefs of to-day with those of twenty years ago, in so far as I can recall them, is not only interesting but profitable. Surely, in this mysterious life of ours a man's best thought should be devoted to religious speculation; and by religion I mean not only theology but also philosophy

— problems of conduct, of self-realization, and of one's relations to his fellows and to the universe. The amateur philosopher need offer no apologies for his theories; the universal questions concern him as much as they do the closeted thinker who contrives a system of metaphysics. In so far as he attempts to understand life, any man is a philosopher. He needs no special vocabulary, for as a participant in life the words of common speech will suffice for him and for other human beings of like experiences. Justification for his lack of technical terms he will find in the words of Christ, which are more intelligible to the unlettered man, if spiritually experienced, than to a savant ignorant of love and hate, of desire and spiritual aspiration, of humility and remorse. Emotional experience, not erudition, is the basis and justification of philosophy. Therefore, because I believe the construction of a philosophy to be the chief end of man I have made bold to write the following pages. My experiences and beliefs, neither unusual nor profound, may, because of their interest to me, prove interesting to others. In a time of shifting creeds, when the church no longer shepherds all the seekers after God, perhaps, too, they are humbly representative of many unvoiced speculations.

I lived for the greater part of my youth in one of the remoter suburbs of a large city, a semirural community typical of mid-Western villages. The near-by city affected our economic life somewhat,

but exercised little influence upon religious beliefs or social customs. Our townsfolk were largely of New England antecedents, and thus were inheritors of a religious tradition. Their habits of Sunday observance were semipuritanical; to enjoy oneself on Sunday, save in the decorous fashion sanctioned by custom, was felt to be improper. The well-to-do, after attending church and Sunday-school in the morning, ate heavily of an elaborate dinner and spent the afternoon driving in the family carriage. This they did without too obvious enjoyment. Others, more strait-laced, refused to go driving but sometimes walked, thus stimulating digestion. And some read religious literature reserved for this day alone and so attained a state of mental relaxation conducive to sleep. Sunday was a sleepy day, a day of almost trance-like calm, a day abhorred by active children. The strictness of the religious beliefs professed by any family, or more truly, perhaps, its deference to convention, was observable in the degree of rigidity with which children were made to renounce Sabbath diversions. The boys who rode bicycles or went swimming were scions of freethinking families or else were hopelessly depraved, embryo sceptics and atheists.

Several churches ministered to a small population — Episcopal, Unitarian, Presbyterian, Congregational, Methodist and Baptist. There was some disparity in their social ranking, the Episcopalians being undoubtedly the most aristocratic,

for they held themselves apart from the adherents of other sects, and were rivalled only by the Unitarians, who knew themselves to be the intellectual élite of the village. It was a matter of chagrin among the more puritanical members of the community that the Unitarians were "such nice people." It was thought to be unfortunate that such agreeable persons should be headed for damnation. Also, their church suppers and socials were among the best and aroused envy in the breasts of more orthodox housewives.

The Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and the rest, in varying degrees puritanical, felt a common bond of Protestantism. The Episcopal Church smacked of Catholicism, suggestive of inquisitions and martyrs. Catholics were rare, and excited in us a mixed incredulity and fear. It was hard to believe that such innocent, natural-seeming people should be related to so horrific an institution as the Catholic Church. We pitied them somewhat as misguided, ignorant creatures. The Unitarian Church, on the other hand, was the home of free-thinking and the originator of beliefs in some way destructive of morality — though in their private lives the Unitarians were disappointingly moral. The social affairs of a small town necessitated, of course, that the orthodox intermingle with the heterodox, but always they did so with mental reservations. One might attend a reception or party given by a Unitarian, but one harbored a secret pity for one's hostess. There was no hatred

or bitterness, only this feeling that one was fortunate in being relatively certain of salvation whereas another's chances were remote.

The people of my native town must have been more amiable than the creeds they professed. I have the impression that they were more kindly and charitable than their beliefs would seem to warrant. And so, though I write of their oddities with a full sense of their absurdity, I do not feel that I am making light of religion. They were not really religious, or better, perhaps, their true religion lay deeper than their professed beliefs. Beliefs are intellectual matters; religion is emotional. Intellectually, the people with whom I was brought up were fifty years — or two thousand — behind the times. They were not aware of this and, had they been, could not easily have found substitutes for their outworn creeds. The old intellectual tenets of Puritanism and Calvinism had atrophied, remaining as symbols of religious observance but otherwise meaningless. It is so always, I suppose. We are essentially unintellectual beings, and the formulæ we pretend to understand mean little to us, are merely nuclei for our religious emotions.

I am sure I cannot say how the larger ideas of the world without found entrance into our complacent community. But some intrusion of liberalizing thought there was. The Unitarians avowed a belief in the fallibility of the Scriptures. They did not believe that Jonah was swallowed by the

whale, and they professed to be sceptical of all miracles. Dread of such destructive beliefs led the pastors of other sects to denounce the atheistic tendencies of modern thought. One heard vague rumors of Evolution, dread term suggestive of the negation of all religion and in some way involving man's kinship with monkeys. Our sturdy belief was that if a man chose to relate himself to a monkey he had himself to thank. It was only perverseness or the devil with hoofs and tail that could explain so absurd a belief. This was twenty years after Huxley had warred upon the theologians of his day; yet I suspect that even now there are villages in the United States in which the controversies, elsewhere dead for forty years, are being fought again, and with the old, unmitigated bitterness.

It was in such a community that I, as a boy, attended Sunday-school and occasionally church. Sunday-school was a conventional institution, and doubtless I should have wished to go had I not been sent; all the boys went, and there was an annual picnic, and at Christmas a tree and entertainment accompanied by disappointing presents. One began his religious education in the infant class. Little pink and blue chairs together with colored charts portraying scenes from biblical history gave a touch of vivacity to an otherwise cheerless exercise. Beneath each picture was a text in gold and red followed by mysterious numerals and names, such as Matthew 2 : 11. Also

there was singing. Whenever I hear "Pull for the shore, sailor," I am transported to my angel infancy. I suppose, too, we were told simple Bible stories and got our first knowledge of the more famous personages of the Old Testament, but I remember little of this period.

The infant class occupied one end of the large church basement devoted to the Sunday-school. Folding doors shut off its activities from those of the graded classes beyond. There circles of chairs, eight or ten in number, like a congeries of nests, served to group the classes, which were divided according to age and sex. The teacher, surrounded by a more or less restless group, if the class were of boys, expounded the lesson for the day and asked questions. As I think of it now, she — all my teachers were women — had a rather difficult job.

I recall my three Sunday-school teachers, good women all of them, with unequal vividness and affection. One was a grandmotherly old lady whose chief qualification for her task was a liking for boys. Her features blur in recollection, and I am conscious only of a vague tenderness for her. My second teacher was, I think, actuated in her work only by a sense of duty. She was a tall woman, perhaps of thirty years, with cold, regular, rather fine features, and formidable eye-glasses. I think she regarded boys as a nuisance, overgiven to squabbling and too little inclined to repose. We met at her house an evening each week and there prepared our lesson for the following Sunday,

seated around the large dining-table and moved to studiousness by a keen expectation of the refreshments to follow. My third and last teacher is the most memorable of the three. Spiritual earnestness must impress even a light-hearted boy with a leaning to heterodoxy; and she was very earnest, for she was a Puritan of the seventeenth century, to whom the devil was a very real person and the road to salvation hard and painful. She wore her thin black hair drawn tightly to her head and parted scrupulously. The blue veins stood out on her worn temples and her eyes shone with spiritual conflict or a hard-won peace. I have speculated since upon the agonies of conscience which her beliefs must have imposed upon her, and I have repented of the unhappiness I must sometimes have caused her. For I rejoiced to turn the class discussion upon some point of heresy of little moment to me but perhaps a vital question with her, who strove to hold a strict faith amid an indifferent or hostile generation. I remember once assuring her that her son at college would return an unbeliever, for agnosticism, I averred, was the inevitable product of the higher education. Herein I was wrong, for colleges do not exercise the liberalizing influence I had credited them with, and her son returned unscathed. She must have been a charitable woman to find in me something worthy her efforts, though I requited them but ill.

My teachers were good women and I liked them

despite our differences of opinion on theological and moral questions. They were not qualified to deal with heresies, and thinking boys are rightly heretical. Instinctively I questioned the morals of some of the Old Testament stories and considered God, as there revealed, a narrow-minded and partisan deity. Made bold by the evasions which my criticisms provoked, I even pretended to doubt the truth of the more miraculous episodes of the Bible. Doubtless much of this sprang from youthful arrogance and the desire to be thought daring; yet in part it was a legitimate desire to reconcile the religion and morals of the Old Testament with the life around me. And my teachers could not effect such a reconciliation. They did not try to, whatever their own private difficulties may have been. They imposed the Bible upon us to be accepted literally and without question. One born to be a doubter naturally found in this rigid instruction ample opportunity for disbelief. Nor was there any adequate teaching of history or geography to compensate for the barrenness of the spiritual instruction. I have heard that nowadays Sunday-school teachers are trained for their task and are supposed to possess qualifications for it other than the vague desire to be of use. This was not the case in my boyhood. Girls of little education but "good workers" and rather soft young men of a tepid piety were regarded as competent to teach religion to children. Yet I cannot say that Sunday-school did me much harm.

Merely it offered nothing to a hungry mind and I had to look elsewhere for my religion — in books and in my own thoughts.

I have neglected to mention our Sunday-school lesson books. These were largely made up of printed questions in some such form as this: What did Isaiah say to the servants of King Hezekiah? See Isaiah 37 : 6. The answer was to be written in a blank space left for that purpose. It was quite possible to thumb the pages of the Bible, extract adequate answers, and prepare one's lesson without being any wiser at the end than before one began. I soon wearied of the exercise, and though I once received a prize for class attendance I never received one for excellence in my work. On one occasion this went to the most industrious but least intellectual and spiritual boy in the class.

Also memorable was the Boys' Brigade, designed to inculcate militant Christianity. We had uniforms and hoped sometime to have guns. Our cartridge-boxes were made to hold each a Bible, the gift of the ladies of the church. I have mine yet, a perfectly good Bible, though the print is rather small and hard to read. I remember we husbanded our ammunition like seasoned campaigners. Our officers were chosen from the boys belonging to the more prominent families, upon some of whom the pledge we were obliged to take, never to smoke, chew tobacco, drink alcoholic liquors, or use profane language, sat with an ill

grace, for they were experimentally addicted to these pleasures. Knowledge of this inevitable hypocrisy and deceit did not further discipline among the rank and file nor strengthen our respect for pledges.

My last public appearance as an orthodox person was on a children's Sunday. I was even then a backslider, for my attendance at Sunday-school had for some time been irregular; therefore I was one of those chosen to "read a piece." Too young to evade the odious task, I perforce complied. But no worse means of buttressing my failing beliefs could have been chosen. Nevermore did I attend Sunday-school, and my boyish dislike for all churchly forms and exercises became a prejudice which was to endure for years, if, indeed, it will ever disappear. Thenceforth I depended more than ever for my religion upon books, my own thoughts and the conversation of friends.

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CHAPTER I

YOUTHFUL HERESY

YOUTH is conventionally supposed to be carefree and happy. Perhaps sometimes it is so, but frequently it is a most miserable time. There is, to be sure, a joy in bodily activity which cools in later years, and a freedom from the sense of mortality; but this is clouded by mental and spiritual unrest. The youth feels himself lost in a world too big for his understanding. He desires a purpose in life and a means of self-expression, but he has only the desire and no specific goal. He feels he can conquer the world but knows not at what point to begin. This is true at least of many boys. Some, of course, are so fortunate as to conceive a definite ambition early in life. This gives them balance and absorbs their thoughts and ideals to the exclusion of speculation upon the ends of life itself. Existence seems to them well worth while and the universe an enchanting field for exploration. To one without a purpose and blessed — or cursed — with the speculative mind it is quite otherwise.

I was an industrious reader, with access to a good library of modern books, mostly fiction. I

should, conventionally, regret that I did not use my time to better advantage in the study of Shakespeare and Plutarch's *Lives*. All great men have, I am told, read improving literature in their youth. But obviously I was not destined for greatness; I read fiction, good and bad, indifferently and with no apparent ill effects. The benefits were the cultivation of a discriminating taste — which weak and conventional literature as well as good can develop — and some acquaintance with the ideas of the time as reflected in fiction.

Fiction, light fiction even, is more influenced by the thought of its day than we commonly suppose. It reflects changing ideals of conduct and these suggest their religious basis. The fiction, American and English, of the 80's and early 90's was colored by the religious unrest of the time. An impressionable boy could not help but catch the spirit of doubt and scepticism, which, fostered by the scientific and religious revolution of the preceding decades was only then becoming widespread. I remember reading *Robert Elsmere* surreptitiously on the attic stairs. It fascinated me, for I sympathized with its clergyman hero who came to doubt the biblical miracles and the divinity of Christ. I suspect I should now find the book tedious, but curious-minded youth will tolerate much dulness. Other semireligious novels of the time strengthened my nascent scepticism. With a fine glow of spirit I resolved to be, like my fictional heroes, an "advanced" thinker. It

is a comment upon the American and English fiction of that day that what passed for daring and thoughtful writing should be readily intelligible to a boy.

I have no doubt that I read books other than novels which suggested interesting ideas to me, but I cannot now recall what they were; obviously no single one made a notable impression upon me. Of books genuinely worth while I must have derived my knowledge chiefly from allusions in other books, from reviews, and from the talk of those more mature and better read than I. Inevitably I made the acquaintance of a few people who, like myself, were seeking a philosophy and a guide to life. These were either persons of no professed faith or Unitarians — whom I judge to be of all shades of liberal thought, many of them even agnostic.

I shall have occasion later to speak of the particular questions of which I thought and upon which my conversation with these friends turned. More important, I think, was the moral influence derived from association with cultured and thoughtful people possessed of a genuine intellectual curiosity. Without the justification of a positive faith they were moral and upright, with finer and saner standards of conduct than those held by most of the avowedly Christian people of my acquaintance. Orthodox church-members freely declared all unbelievers immoral. I found that this was untrue, and orthodoxy suffered accordingly in my eyes.

It seemed to me that if the people whose lives I admired had no religion — at least no orthodox religion — it followed inevitably that the road to right living lay in the destruction of conventional and inherited beliefs.

In these emancipated souls there was, however, a trace of intellectual pride, though this did not then offend me. I, too, wished to be of the elect, those strong in their own reason and fearless of any road that knowledge led them. In their polite contempt for the narrowly orthodox who accepted beliefs ready-made without scrutiny or criticism, I naturally enough joined. At a later time I conceived a distaste for the intolerance of unbelievers. Intolerance, I came to find, is not the exclusive property of any sect, but is an attitude of mind to be found anywhere. The offensive attacks of freethinkers upon beliefs sacred to many good people, the narrow dogmatism of many scientists, I was later to know as equally expressive of the cramped mind inhospitable to all beliefs but its own. Those who delight to show irreverence by humorous attacks upon serious religious beliefs offend the taste more than the intellect; and I am often loath to ally myself with many whose beliefs I share for the reason that I dislike their intellectual manners. Happily I met few such when I was most impressionable. My friends, freethinkers and sceptics though they were, revered truth and the search for truth; they were intolerant only of those who, refusing to think, yet

sought to impose conventional and traditional beliefs upon freer souls. With this intolerance I can still sympathize, though pity now mitigates my dislike.

I should mention in this place, also, the influence of family tradition upon my religious life. My relatives were mostly orthodox people inordinately proud of an ancestral bishop, a vigorous and hot-headed pioneer, who rode circuit and founded small denominational colleges. His published memoirs are, it is true, dull enough reading, composed chiefly of an interminable correspondence on educational and church matters intermixed with trivial family affairs — this when he might have written a most fascinating account of the settlement of the Middle West.

My kinship to the bishop pleases me now, and even more my relationship to his son, also a clergyman, who preached that any persons outside of the Episcopal Church who should attain heaven must do so through "uncovenanted mercies." But I was once indignant at such narrowness as this, and the residuary vitality of the bishop and of my great-uncle, his son, did much to make me a heretic.

At the risk of becoming tedious I should like to record here some of the religious difficulties which seemed to me at one time momentous and insoluble. They may possess a certain antiquarian interest if nothing more. All, it seems, sprang from the clash of scriptural statements with the prin-

ciples of evolutionary science. The chief were these: How was the statement of the creation of the world and of man in the book of Genesis to be reconciled with the facts of astronomy and geology? Were the miracles related in the Bible possible? Was Christ divine? Upon the answers to these questions depended a whole series of corollaries.

Certain good people anxious to effect a compromise acceptable to every one contended that the six days of creation referred to in Genesis might plausibly mean six geological epochs, each of vast but uncertain duration. But this argument was not one to warm the hearts of the despairing, for the number of geological epochs in the evolution of the earth seemed to be a matter of considerable dispute. Also, such a figurative interpretation of the Scriptures made possible a whole series of similar interpretations. Thus the Bible became a book of doubtful meanings and of questionable inspiration. Rather than twist apparent literal meanings in so irresponsible a way, it seemed to many better to consider the book of Genesis as a bit of mythology, like the creation myths in the folk-lore of all peoples. This was a rational escape out of the difficulty but was by implication destructive, for if the Bible was in part mythology only, how was the inspiration theory longer tenable? With the admission of one doubt, all the old-time theological defenses of the Bible as the word of God became endangered.

Miracles were even a more vexed problem than that of creation. Could natural law ever be violated? Did the sun stand still for Joshua? Did Christ raise people from the dead? Some miracles were, it seemed, harder to accept than others. It was more difficult to believe that the whale swallowed Jonah, or that Elijah was borne to heaven in a fiery chariot, than that Christ possessed wonderful powers of healing which to those of his time seemed miraculous. Yet disbelief in one miracle made easier disbelief in all miracles. None were in accord with the science of the day. They were not verified by the common experiences of life. Both reason and science made belief in them difficult, if not impossible. As will be apparent later, miracles have since ceased to concern me. To be sure, the inviolability of natural law, so-called, seems to me not so inflexible as I once thought it. Yet miracles are of minor importance, the belief in them illustrating only the human desire to base religion on ocular proofs. Spiritual truths must seek a deeper origin than this, which, if found, makes miracles of little moment. So I think now, but at the time of which I write the importance of miracles seemed very great to me, as to most people of the day whose religious beliefs were unsettled.

When subjected to the same scrutiny, the evidences of Christ's divinity were no longer what theologians had declared them to be. Christ remained a great moral leader, uncertainly glimpsed

through the mists of tradition and hero-worship, but a man only, however great and commanding his personality. His value to the modern world was then no greater than his moral leadership. In so far as his ethical system had validity for those who no longer believed in his divine origin, thus far only was he to be reverenced as one of the men significant in the world's history, a great moral leader, and a force still to be reckoned with.

I wish I could recall clearly the conception of God which I gained as a boy in Sunday-school. He was as old as grandfather, I know, but not so kind. We were told to fear him. I did not understand how one could both fear and love God, and no teacher ever made the paradox clear to me. Christ was more appealing, more human, but he was enigmatic, and I did not understand what was meant by his being the Son of God. I must have learned pitifully little, but that this was so was not altogether my fault. Some few things made a profound impression and caused me endless speculation. We were told that if we were good we should ultimately go to heaven, there to live "forever." I tried to realize "forever" and became dizzy in my efforts to grasp the term. I wondered, too, who made God, for I could not conceive of a causeless cause. Everything in nature sprang from something else; but God merely *was*, and no teacher could tell me why. I hardly dare assert that I thought, too, of the impossibility of conceiving either of a finite or an infinite uni-

verse; but this I know, that years later when I read of the antinomies of Kant and the limitations of the human intellect, I felt that I had returned to the speculations of childhood. Kant phrases philosophically what a child seeks unsuccessfully to grasp. The child tests the resources of his understanding and tries to reconcile a paradox just as does the philosopher. We are born with a question on our lips and we spend our lives and the strength of our maturity in the attempt to answer it.

These, briefly, were the questions which seemed to me as a boy of the most vital religious significance. Upon them I argued and speculated, but of only a few of their implications was I aware. Of the existence of a personal God I became uncertain. He seemed very remote, no longer a God intimate with man, such as the Bible had portrayed him. Perhaps he was the designer of this surprising and complicated universe, a first cause beyond the atom; perhaps he breathed life and a soul into man at some stage of the evolutionary process. In any case, he seemed far aloof from the world. Yet I think I must have regarded him as a person still, for it is impossible to forget the imagery of childhood, and the first cause wherefrom this law-governed universe came into being seemed of necessity a personal force. Nor could one legitimately deny his existence however much one doubted and questioned. Atheism seemed a hard philosophy to accept. An agnostic one

might be, but an atheist was altogether too dogmatic. Doubtless this was largely an unreasoned attitude but I believe a defensible one. I can still sympathize with any shade of unbelief save atheism. It is a belief so foreign to human inclination, to instinctive desire, as well as so difficult to defend logically that I suspect the intellectual soundness of any one who professes it. What is usually called atheism is only a form of hostility that takes satisfaction in flouting God conceived of as a person. This is another matter altogether. When I object to God's way of ordering the universe I express a lively interest in him and imply my belief in his existence. When I am doubtful whether to regard him as a force, a personality, or a primal cause only, I confess to a state of uncertainty which is properly agnosticism.

Of the corollaries consequent upon a disbelief in the inspiration of the Bible and uncertainty as to the nature of God, I shall mention but two: the question of the efficacy of prayer, and the source and authority of moral standards. My ideas upon both questions, though naïve, were, I think, representative of many unbelievers of that day and this.

Prayer was characterized by a man I much admired as a confused din of importunities poured into the wearied ears of God. The conception tickled my fancy. The mechanical difficulty of assorting and answering innumerable prayers appeared to me as insurmountable. Less grotesquely,

prayer seemed a request that the natural order of the world be set aside — virtually that a miracle be granted. To one disbelieving in miracles it was, then, logically unjustifiable. As I look back upon this state of mind from what I consider a point of more enlightened understanding, I am moved to wonder at the narrow intellectual ground upon which I debated questions so momentous. My conclusions were reasonable enough, but they left out of account all spiritual experiences and needs. Virtually these did not exist for me. I remember asking a friend who professed conversion to an accepted faith, what the experience meant to him. He could not explain it; therefore I disbelieved in it and thought him a victim of hysteria. But though I have never known the spiritual revolution commonly called conversion, I think that now I understand what my friend could not put into words. It was none the less real to him because inexplicable and logically indefensible. But only time and spiritual experience could teach me this.

I have said that I admired the lives of my agnostic friends. I wished like them to live an intellectual life free from narrowing creeds and belittling affirmations. Moral beauty and upright conduct seemed to me most worthy of emulation when divorced from religious threats and promises of rewards. How human beings came to have a moral sense at all was not so easily answered. I never settled the point to my satisfaction. In the main, right conduct seemed to be an evolving

ideal, keeping step with man's development from the brute. In some mysterious way it fitted him to live an ever richer life, was one of the expressions of his adaptation to the world about him. But this theory was not wholly satisfying. It was fraught with difficulties. These I evaded, contenting myself with the working principle that a moral life was, for some reason, desirable and that it might be attained without religious justification and support.

Perhaps these religious difficulties, typical of those much argued in my youthful world, will serve broadly to indicate this stage of my spiritual development. My one method of procedure was to test all religious conceptions by the principles of common sense and science — in so far as I understood scientific principles. Reason I took to be the final arbiter of all human acts and beliefs. I should, perhaps, have admitted that the human reason was inadequate as yet to explain the riddle of existence. But I should have contended that it is an evolving attribute of man, ultimately competent to explain every vexed question. I should not have admitted it to be subject to inflexible restrictions nor sought another way out of my difficulties. Most of the deep emotional and spiritual experiences of life were unknown to me; I had yet to find a place for them in the scheme of things and to explain them. The few that came close to me I evaded or half explained in intellectual terms solely. My state of mind was that of many peo-

ple whom I observe to-day: They find a tolerable contentment in the exercise of the intellect; what is not easily explicable by reason, they either ignore altogether or dismiss as of relatively little importance. But it is not possible for the persistent seeker after truth to rest content in so limited a world. There came a time later when the old questions returned to me with greater urgency, demanding a more adequate solution.

My tendency at this stage of my spiritual growth was to turn from what had proved barren speculation to the practical questions of social conduct. A live interest in these was soon to be born in me of the social unrest of the time. I think of myself before that interest came as a typical and pathetic figure, honestly striving to find a place in an inexplicable world. I raised my eyes to the stars and realized my littleness in so vast a universe. But I was proud to lift my head beneath them, to feel that in time I might understand something of the laws by which they moved. If my destiny was of no moment in this remorseless universe evolving from the unknown to a greater unknown, I had yet the fortitude to endure life, and the desire to make that life of use to others. I felt myself, like Will-o'-the-Mill, a rat in a trap, but strong enough to live out my brief and inconsequent moment. I thrilled to the heroism which could look unafraid upon a hopeless existence and yet not sink into inaction. But I did not then know what to do.

CHAPTER II

SOCIALISM AND UTOPIA

To be a socialist in one's youth is the mark of some generosity of soul and some sensitiveness to the cruelty, waste and inefficiency of our social system. A cooling temper may justify other methods of reform than those of co-operative enterprise; but youth, impatient of tardy progress, should seek to right all inherited wrongs at a blow and thus realize Utopia. I pity the college freshmen whom I see yearly, conventional-minded boys for the most part, looking forward to a life of business and an inherited station in life. Only a few, apparently, think upon social questions and are impatient to remodel this sorry scheme entire. At twenty a young man should be anxious to build a barricade in the streets and fight the militia and police, those champions of the bourgeoisie. I feel myself fortunate in that I was once sure Utopia was near, to be achieved by legislative enactment. I suppose Utopia can, truly, be realized any day — if enough people wish it and will sacrifice themselves for it. But a wider experience of humanity has convinced me, sadly enough, that not soon will the wonder-working revolution

come to pass, for not enough people really care, or have the courage to follow an ideal rather than the dictates of tradition and self-interest. This is my belief, though the hope can never quite die that the new order will come in my time. I have disbelieved in the miracles of religion, but a social miracle, such as this would be, I can hope for until I almost persuade myself of its possibility.

Many turn to socialism who have failed to find in religion that which their natures craved — idealism, faith, hope, an incentive to altruism. That is why the church, with some justice, looks upon socialists as unbelievers, even as enemies to all religion. It is the memory of disillusionment, of thwarted hopes — of these and some other things — that often makes socialists hostile to religion. I speak from my own experience. When speculation on the mysteries of existence and the problems of Christian faith had begun to seem profitless, I found a theme for enthusiasm and effort in the socialistic programme for the reorganization of society. Its first appeal was not intellectual but emotional. It was to all intents religious, both in its attractive power and in its stimulus to action. Indeed, I believe that socialism in its hold upon its adherents is in the main religious: It fires the emotions, seeks an adequate outlet for the instincts of altruism and expresses its ideals in an intellectual scheme adequate or nearly adequate to its desires.

I cannot trace the first influences of socialistic

thought upon me, but I recall the book which first set me dreaming of a perfect social state. This was Bellamy's *Looking Backward.* I seem dimly to recall Bulwer Lytton's *The Coming Race* as a predecessor to this, but its influence must have been slight. I was seventeen when I read *Looking Backward* and sat up far into the night to finish it. I have not since reread it, but my recollection is that the Utopia it outlined was largely one of perfected machinery, of novel electric appliances to do away with irksome toil. Hard and bare as this ideal state must have been, it appealed to me in that it released men from the grind of our industrial life and left them free to do things better worth while. I must have found other literature to feed the taste thus created, for, without reading the more solid works of social criticism, I became secretly a Utopian and, as I thought later, a socialist. I was cautious in my professions, however, for fear of being thought an enthusiast. When asked if I believed in Bellamy's dreams I professed scepticism of human ability to realize them, at least soon. It was a valid criticism but born of the head not the heart.

Books defining Utopias are profitable reading, from those of Plato and Sir Thomas More to that of Mr. H. G. Wells. It is a shallow criticism which declares them impracticable. Our dreams and our ideals set the standards of our personal conduct; no less do social ideals set standards to which we must endeavor to make society conform. We may

differ among ourselves as to the means for the accomplishment of an end, but were we once agreed upon the end itself progress would be swift. Our hit-or-miss society lacks unity of purpose, or indeed any purpose at all. We merely drift, professing a belief in vague forces determining our social destiny, but seldom endeavoring to determine what those forces are and to work in accord with them. I can conceive of no better reading for youth than idealistic literature, of which Utopian dreams are one form.

Utopias appeal as much to the sense of beauty as to the sense of order and justice. For an ideal state is one in which social organization has become artistic, a society freed from waste, either of men or of material things; in which energy is directed without loss or confusion of purpose to an intelligent end. I was still only a boy at the time of the Columbian Exposition in Chicago, and its beauty of architecture and sculpture and its apparent perfection of organization made a great impression upon me, coloring my later conceptions of the ideal city-state — a place of wonderful architecture and spacious homes and parks, a place serene and cleanly despite its stir of life. I dreamed, I suppose, of the kingdom of heaven come to earth. But the vision was both more real and more desirable than that of the melancholy heavenly city I had learned to picture in Sunday-school. This earthly paradise demanded all the powers which I somehow thought of as

forfeited in heaven, all the good human energies exercised to their highest pitch. The good in human nature would blossom in such ideal surroundings; the hard unprofitable toil would be evaded by mechanical devices, and men would devote themselves to art and science. It was a stimulating dream, and though its realization seems now more remote than once, I do not therefore think it valueless. Like the ideals we hold for ourselves and never quite achieve, it serves as a goal for effort.

A common fallacy employed by the enemies of socialism argues that were human beings good enough to live in a socialistic state, the entire mechanism of such a society would be superfluous. The theory seems to be that to a perfected humanity all forms of society are perfect and, by implication, to an imperfect humanity all forms are equally imperfect. By analogy, I need not know the means of expression if I have a thought to express; one method of securing justice is as good as another if society desires justice; one means of securing competent representatives is as good as another if we desire good government. Bad English, obscuring a good thought, a clumsy and cruel legal system in a state desirous of justice, and incompetent representatives of intelligent communities belie such a theory. We must not only possess an ideal of government but we must plan a means to its realization if we are ever to succeed with it. Only as human effort takes an ideal from

the world of dreams and then devises an adequate form of expression does it become an actuality. Therefore, the critic of socialism, if he agrees that a perfected society is an admirable end of human effort, must devise a counter-scheme better than socialism if he is to make his criticism pertinent. Because I was a Utopian, dreaming of the perfect state, I became in time socialistic, for socialism seemed to afford the only means of attaining my ideal. As a rational being I had, therefore, to subscribe to it until I should find some other and better system.

Political animosities were, it seems to me, much more keen twenty years ago than now, and narrow partisanship was the rule. In my home town, which was largely Republican, a Democrat was regarded much as was a freethinker; he was a dangerous and misguided person. The Civil War was nearer then than now and men "voted as they had fought" — "with their eyes shut" some one had added. With the passing of the Grand Army we have entered on a new age in politics, for to my generation the Civil War seems almost as remote as the Revolution. I cannot pretend to an early freedom from prejudice, but I remember that I disliked extremely the few political leaders I chanced to see. I recall hearing several ex-governors in one of the campaigns of the 90's, a rear-platform campaign with noise and banners. Their speeches consisted largely of vilification of Governor Altgeld of Illinois, a Democrat, who had re-

cently pardoned the anarchists imprisoned for alleged participation in the Haymarket Riot of 1886. I knew nothing of the facts, but the cheap personal abuse disgusted me.

I was too young at the time of the trial of the Haymarket anarchists in Chicago to understand the proceedings. But a little later, when I first awoke to social questions, the anarchists still loomed large in the public mind, particularly when Governor Altgeld defied public opinion and pardoned those imprisoned. The newspapers denounced him as worse than an anarchist, but I heard in occasional defense of him that he had righted a crying wrong in that the anarchists had not been given a fair trial, but had been condemned by public opinion. It is curious how some early obscurity or difficulty unexplained will lie patiently in the attic of memory to be dragged to light later. The anarchists always interested me, and some understanding of their trial, the charges upon which they were tried, and the passing of sentence by public opinion, for which the court was but the mouthpiece, gave me a genuine insight into the ways of society. The order of events is this: ignorant men, the slaves of our industrial system, feeling the hardness of their lot, denounce society or capital. They make wild speeches and print revolutionary articles, but do nothing worse. They are usually harmless when left free to speak, or at the worst far less dangerous than the highwayman or thug whom we suffer so patiently.

There comes a time, however, when the "agitators" hold some public meeting, or parade the streets without a permit, and thus afford an excuse for police oppression. The police, employing the traditional methods of ignorance and brutality, club some poor fellow, and a comrade fires a shot or throws a bomb. The law has been defied, the pillars of the state have been shaken, and sacrifice — blood for blood — must be offered up to allay public hysteria.

The trial of the Haymarket anarchists makes sad reading. They were condemned for the exercise of free speech, for the publication of inflammatory articles. These were not condemned when written. They merely served as a legal pretext for condemnation and execution when occasion demanded. The public murder of a few men is perhaps a negligible thing in our unstable society with its innumerable homicides, legal and illegal. It is not that which impresses me now, but rather the apathy which permits unhealthy conditions and wakes fitfully to apply a remedy which does not go to the root of the disease. I have no liking for violence, that of anarchists, mobs, mine and factory owners, or the police. But I can never cease to wonder at a society which is blind to conditions which produce violence, which does not seek to remedy the causes but is content with palliatives that all experience shows to be inadequate.

The fear and hatred in which the anarchists

were held extended to all radicals. Socialists, anarchists and members of trade-unions were all one in our eyes — enemies of society and to be fought without quarter. The hard times of '93 and the consequent riots and strikes did much to increase this animosity. The unemployed even were regarded as a menace by a society which did nothing to aid them. When Coxey's army marched on Washington it was followed with jeers and ridicule that thinly veiled a fear of social revolution. I did not then understand the American contempt for the homeless and penniless, the man without a job. It is still strong but not so unintelligent as once. Since then the complacency of the average American has been shaken by the revelations of corruption in business and politics, and though innocent strikers are still murdered by hired thugs in the industrial cities of New Jersey and in the mining fields of Michigan, West Virginia and Colorado, we are no longer proud as a nation of our inability to solve our labor problem. Perhaps those who have altered slowly with the times are not so aware of the change as are the young men who were born shortly before the new era. To them the contrast between the twentieth century and the nineteenth is marked. Many of the leaders of thought to-day are socialists or philosophical anarchists, but these epithets are no longer sufficient of themselves to deprive radical leaders of influence. Reform movements are now more than instinctive protests of the oppressed who are

without leaders and formulated ideals. Revolution now finds a voice and intellectual guidance.

As I grew to manhood, socialism came not only to express my ideal but, in so far as I understood it, provided the mechanism for the attainment of that ideal. I admitted a margin of possible error and defect, but I looked confidently to human ingenuity to surmount all unforeseen difficulties. Yet the appeal of socialism was essentially religious and I did not concern myself much with its mechanical difficulties. I felt that in it I could find a place to work with those of like ideals; and my religious doubts had made me very lonely. Socialism offered the forgetfulness of self, the dependence upon some greater force without, that religion grants. I did not then know that adherence to socialism was only a temporary expression of my religious needs. That realization came later when socialism had ceased to satisfy me.

I must violate the chronology of my narrative at this point to make clear the inadequacy of socialism to my spiritual needs. My realization of its deficiencies was slow to find its way from subconscious thought to definite and formulated objection. It is impossible, in retrospect, to trace the steps of such a progress. There must early have been some sense of inadequacy, however, for much as I believed in socialism and admired its programme and ideals, I never became a worker for the cause. Had I done so I should have been forced to devote my intellectual and moral powers

to the one end, and I instinctively shrank from so whole-hearted a surrender, much as one would shrink from monastic vows unless certain he would never regret the sacrifice.

Socialism alone was not sufficient to satisfy all my spiritual cravings. To its adherents it offers a tangible programme of social conduct, it offers a fellowship in which the individual can submerge his own narrow and selfish desires amid the enthusiasm for a larger cause. In doing this, socialism provides a part substitute for religion. But the universe is larger than human society. This world, we are told, is an inconsiderable atom in the plenitude of space. In an all but infinite universe humanity is seemingly dwarfed to insignificance. Of what importance are all theories of society to a race of beings so petty as ours? If one can forget the surrounding immensity and the endless past and future of the world, attempts to realize a perfected humanity may seem all-important. But if one cannot forget this, some religion or philosophy justifying the importance of man in the universe is necessary as an incentive to endeavor. Such a philosophy or religion is not the concern of socialism, to be sure, but it is the concern of the individual socialist. He must have a religion, a philosophy greater than his social creed, if he is to find spiritual peace. Unless he finds his place in the universe and believes in the worth and dignity of the individual he cannot work heartily for his cause. I am employing the

term socialism very broadly in this instance as a convenient word to embrace all organized altruistic effort for the reconstruction of society. An individual philosophy is necessary to the worker in any cause.

In order to illustrate the point let me push the question a step further. Why should the individual sacrifice himself for an ideal and seek through the denial of selfish desires to aid in the realization of a better society which may never exist in his lifetime? If the universe is a blind and meaningless mechanism, would it not be better that human beings, recognizing themselves to be accidents and insignificant, should refuse to perpetuate the race? The world is a place of suffering; life itself is often ghastly unless it has ultimate significance. Each man must find his justification for life through his individual efforts to devise a philosophy, unless he is to live a mere animal existence and shut his mind to the ultimate questions. Are idealism, altruism, self-sacrifice and all the highest human qualities only accidents void of worth and meaning? If so, man is indeed better than the forces which made him, but because of that very fact is more liable to pain than if he were only a brute; and to perpetuate his kind for the propagation of these virtues seems needlessly cruel and pitiless. Individual and social ideals must seek their justification in philosophy and religion. I recognize that it is possible to live and to hold an honorable place in the world while re-

fusing to consider the cosmic mysteries. Such a refusal to inquire beyond the present is the course of many. But to others it is impossible, and to such, the first need, before action itself and a genuine participation in life, is a philosophy which will give worth and meaning to human conduct and ally it with those forces of the universe of which human life is but one expression.

In the works of Mr. H. G. Wells, fertile and suggestive as they are, I find no attempt to link the individual existence with the process of the suns. Even in *First and Last Things*, a book presumably devoted to philosophy, there is a curious and unsatisfactory evasion of the difficult points that most philosophies attempt to explain. Mr. Wells seems to me the most interesting product of socialistic thought in English literature, and perhaps it is a comment upon the philosophic inadequacy of socialism that he does not seek a source for morality, does not define a God or even deny him, nor does he justify the pain of human effort. Heroism is to be found in his utopias and his novels, but altruism is made to justify its own existence. Were I one of the Samurai of the ideal state I should not be content to sacrifice myself blindly. I should ask, Of what worth is the state? What meaning has it? I could not do the work required of me until I had found an answer.*

* Since this was written, Mr. Wells has published his admirable novel *Mr. Britling Sees It Through*, in which it is suggested that he is no longer indifferent to religion.

I have not discussed all the reasons for my early adherence to socialism, partly because I am not an avowed socialist in the strict sense, but socialistic merely — that is to say, a believer in organized human effort for the realization of a better social and industrial system. I should define myself more accurately as a Utopian. Socialism offers, in my opinion, the best working plan as yet devised for the attainment of an improved society, but were another to be formulated which met my ideals more fully I should transfer my allegiance. I think, too, that the socialist state when it is once realized will be quite different from what the socialists now anticipate. A thousand difficulties will have to be adjusted. And socialism is not a final ideal in any case, but only an immediate goal. Other horizons will appear when it is realized. But of this I shall have more to say in another place.

CHAPTER III

THE DISILLUSIONMENTS OF COLLEGE

Life has offered me few disappointments so great as those of my college years. Their pathos lay in the disparity between expectation and realization; in that and in their seeming needlessness. For surely college, designed to satisfy mental and spiritual hunger, could be made to do so. The task seems at least not impossible, though doubtless more formidable than it appears. Yet who really cares to satisfy the student's needs and desires? Colleges are organized partly to suit the purposes and convenience of instructors, permitting each to pursue his own work as he sees fit. Even more are colleges made subservient to administrative routine. They must run smoothly and uniformly. Personality is sacrificed to machinery, as in any other large and complicated institution. There are, of course, advantages in these methods for the teacher who is also a specialist and research worker, and for the college administrator who is a slave to efficiency. But for the student there are few; he must pick up an education as his native ability, his enthusiasm and his previous training may direct him.

Perhaps I shall be thought extreme. Yet it is true that my five years of college seemed to me at the time and seem to me now unsatisfactory in nearly every respect. I was unhappy because I could not find my place in life, because I did not know clearly my own intellectual needs nor any way of satisfying them. I chanced, indeed, upon a little training that later proved valuable, and so acquired some useful knowledge, more by lucky accident than by design. Certainly I was not guided by competent tutors to survey the fields of human knowledge, learn the relations of one subject to another, and permitted finally to select my own little garden plot for intensive cultivation. Could all this have been done for me, and it seems no impossible task, I should have prospered. I could then have found the work I liked and needed and have entered into it, for I should have understood its relation to other knowledge and to life. I needed guidance to a survey of knowledge and philosophical thought — which, if adequate only to my simple needs, was not so vast and impossible a task as it sounds. But no such guidance was vouchsafed me. I blundered through a chaos of courses and emerged dissatisfied and incompetent and, save for a desire to learn, uneducated.

Colleges may have improved in the last fifteen years, and with a clearer insight into the student's needs may help him to find himself. I hope it is so; yet I observe that the attitude of the student to his college has changed little if at all since my

time. He endeavors to make college a place of romance by ignoring, in so far as he can, all its realities. As an undergraduate he seeks to make its tasks and pleasures conform to a literary ideal which he has built upon magazine fiction and athletic stories for boys. Once he has been graduated he turns to a business career with the feeling that life is now to begin in earnest. Into his life-work he takes little save a memory of friendships. His four years of training have not prepared him to live. At the most he may have acquired some knowledge of use in business or in preparation for a profession. I am speaking, of course, of the average student who enters college with no particular ambitions and with no genuine intellectual curiosity. Yet intellectual interest is latent in every one, and it should be the task of the college to animate it and give it food for growth. Instead, the college of a few years ago — like the college of to-day, I fear — forced the student to comply with certain regulations, pass a prescribed series of courses and there left him. The student, little interested in the whole process, was generally content to be let alone, unaware of his deprivations, his intellectual possibilities undeveloped. A student once wrote: "When a man has graduated and has forgotten the theories he has learned in college, he is prepared to make a success of business." The sentence implies that what is learned at college has no relation to life and is an obstacle rather than an aid to achievement. I believe this

to be an opinion widely held by college graduates. Who can say that it is not largely justified?

I belonged to the smaller class of those who do not accept without criticism what the college offers, but who compare what they receive with what they desire. I wished to find myself, to learn how to think; to discover in books those ideas which would help me to frame my little creed of life and so teach me how to live. Nothing was done for me to this end. Nobody saw my problems or cared to solve them. The college did not concern itself much with human conduct, for this involves emotions, intuitions, philosophy and religion. These are living things, difficult to analyze. Their place in the history of human society may, of course, be assigned and explained, or their part in the psychology of the human animal labelled and defined. But they must be treated as facts, as dead things, not as living forces. The young man's hunger for knowledge is not primarily for facts. He is selfishly concerned with his own problems of conduct and belief. In the solution of these the college is of little assistance, for it recognizes truly but two parts of the human mechanism, memory and the reason; reason, too, as narrowly restricted to deductions from verifiable facts. With those less certain facts of emotion, faith and conduct it has as little to do as possible. It cannot ignore them altogether but it minimizes them, because reason in its deductions from them cannot be so exact as in the laboratory and its conclusions

so little open to dispute. The spokesman for the college ideal implies, when he does not openly declare, that the reason is all in all, and the intuitions and emotions only animal accessories which we shall shed as we climb higher in the evolutionary scale. The conventional belief that a college professor is a dehumanized, intellectual and unemotional person is usually untrue to fact. But it is, I believe, true of the college as a corporate person, for an institution has a fatal power of expressing only the less human characteristics of those who compose it. Could a college be personified it would resemble the caricature of the college teacher which is accepted by the man in the street as a realistic likeness: it would be a creature mostly intellect, with only vestigial traces of emotions — a startling and a repellent thing.

I am deploring the lack of cultural ideals in the modern college, that of fifteen years ago and today. I do not wish, by implication, to suggest a return to the classical education of another time. This was, indeed, more truly cultural than the education offered me, but it can never be restored to its former place. Knowledge of the science, literature and philosophy subsequent to the great days of Greece and Rome must have its larger share in a new cultural system, if we ever attain such. But in the higher education of our colleges at the present time we see only the old guard of classicists clinging to their dwindling prerogatives and prestige, and arrayed against them all the

forces of the scientist and specialist, who make no pretense to any cultural ideal but seek only to train other specialists, be the field science, philology, history, economics or literature. Between these two forces, the classicists and specialists, humanism, that seeks knowledge as an aid to a finer and more intelligent way of life, finds no friends at all.

I have departed overmuch from the autobiographical form in which I began this narrative and have told nothing of my college experiences. These were colorless and negative, interesting only as the fruits of the system which flourished in my day, a system wherein knowledge was sought for its own sake and the connection of study with the problems of belief and conduct was left for the student to discern. I entered college hungering for knowledge which would aid me to see my problems clearly, but with no more definite aim. I had no desire to study any particular subject. I did not wish to become a mathematician, a student of Greek, a physicist nor an economist. Numbers of courses there were, beautifully graduated and designed to fit the student for any one of these specialties. But I had no future vocation in mind. My desire was both less and more: I wished, naïvely, to get some notion of man's relation to the world into which he is born. There was no course or series of courses designed to give such knowledge. In its stead there was a miscellaneous course, a carryall course, fitted, like the

telescope valise, to hold anything from tinware to tracts. It required a little English, a little history, a little French or German, a little philosophy and political economy — in short, it offered education on the cafeteria plan.

I shall not speak individually of my instructors, for to do so would be invidious. Some were inspiring, others stirred only a loathing for all knowledge. But though the instruction offered was uneven in quality, several conditions were so widely true as to make safe ground for generalization. First, among the younger men usually assigned to the elementary classes, and often among the older men as well, there was little culture, by which I mean little interest in knowledge other than that peculiar to a limited field. In this, our instructors grubbed toilsomely to acquire a vast amount of detailed information, and this was often valuable, I doubt not. But the perspective of workers in minutiæ is almost inevitably distorted, for only a man with a large mind can safely acquire much knowledge in a restricted field. They were unable to see the mental condition of their students, unable to guess the needs, not of future scholars but of citizens of the State and persons of culture. Had the students wished, more than the acquisition of facts, to know the relation of these particular facts to the larger world of human experience, few of my instructors would have guessed the need, and still fewer were qualified to meet it.

How can the issue be evaded? The training of specialists may fit them to work diligently and accurately within certain limits, but how can it train them for broad generalizations, for philosophizing, for teaching? A teacher should, it is true, know how to keep his specialty in its own particular pigeonhole of classified knowledge, but he should also know the place of its compartment in relation to all other compartments of knowledge. He cannot even be a good worker in his own field unless he can do this. If he magnifies the value of his work, conceives it to be the most important thing in life, he becomes a pedant and, however great his store of facts, a scholastic rather than a scholar. The criticism does not apply to scientists only, indeed is less applicable to them than to other specialists in that the nature of scientific knowledge and the means of its advancement justify methods which in other fields of work lead only to fatuity. The passion for scientific method inspired by the phenomenal advances of natural science manifests itself in odd fashion in fields of thought in which facts are of less importance than the interpretation of facts. The exaggerations of literary scholarship are a case in point. Scholarship no longer implies familiarity with ideas, but a mastery of details. In teaching thus inspired there can be no cultural appeal.

It is obvious that college disappointed me in that it gave me facts only, whereas I sought culture and familiarity with ideas. The lurking un-

easiness of my mind due to an inadequate religion might have been allayed for a time had my college training given me the mental food I needed. The solution of ultimate problems would only have been deferred, but in the interim I should have enjoyed a period of mental growth and satisfaction. Instead, my religious difficulties returned; the college courses could not drive them away. Nor did my small acquisitions of knowledge aid me greatly in the solution of my doubts and questionings.

The influence of my instructors upon me served at first only to increase my scepticism and unbelief. The thought of the time was thoroughly impregnated with the evolutionary philosophy of natural science. Herbert Spencer, if not the accredited representative of scientific philosophy, was certainly the thinker who was both most widely read and at the same time most in accord with the spirit of the age. In the evolutionary process, conduct, art, religion and social institutions were to be thought of as satellites thrown off by the evolving mass of animate matter; they themselves evolved like the various life forms, and were merely biological phenomena somewhat disguised. But even Spencer would have been taboo to many science instructors then and now, on the sole ground that he professed to be a philosopher, and all philosophy is thought by some to be absurd and a waste of effort. Moreover, Spencer admitted a realm of the unknowable, and many a

young scientist of to-day will deny there is such. He will confess to a realm of the unknown but not of the unknowable. It is strange that a man professing to think should not come soon to a realization of the inadequacy of the human intellect to explain the universe. The difficulty is not with the amount of knowledge our intellects can bring to us, but with the kind of knowledge. This is the foundation of philosophy, to discriminate between the realms of the intellect and of the intuitions. But apparently the distinction is not known or is disregarded by the majority of scientists and those who in other fields of knowledge consider scientific methods of thought solely adequate to human needs.

Ignorance of philosophical and religious thought did not, however, deter instructors, scientists chiefly, from ridiculing all but scientific methods of seeking truth. Stories were current of one professor who informed his classes that before doing work with him they must cease to believe in God; of another who declared that religion had done more harm than any other human superstition. These, though exceptional instances by reason of their puerile bravado, were yet, I believe, fairly representative of the ideas of many others reluctant to advertise their prejudices in so open or so violent a fashion. This childish hostility is indeed not without some provocation, for science has suffered at the hands of ecclesiastical institutions. It was once a heresy and its professors were sub-

ject to martyrdom; even in recent years it has been vilified by religious bigots. Nor is it surprising that science responds to the narrow attacks of persons professedly religious with abuse equally indiscriminate and unfair. If it denies that its enemy has a place in the world of thought, or the right to exist, it pursues the methods of human beings the world over. Of intolerance is born answering intolerance. The doubts of a young man seeking what he may hold to be truth are not, however, clarified by such ill-tempered controversy. He is almost sure to think that one or the other of the disputants is entirely right and the other equally wrong, rather than that both are in part right. If he is born to this generation he is most likely to side with the scientists and, if he does so, become contemptuous of religion.

I was never wholly contemptuous of religion, though much of it I thought a survival of superstition and born of ignorance and absurdity. I regarded it sometimes as an interesting phenomenon, perhaps to disappear as the tail has disappeared in the evolutionary process. Yet it inspired in me curious and mixed emotions. Some of its adherents were fascinating and lovable, were somehow less obvious than the simpler types of intellectual unbelievers; their personalities revealed greater complexities, seemed indeed to embrace a wider field of life. They were vivid and alive. In contrast with religion, science and the purely intellectual life seemed rather chill.

I think I envied the ardent spiritual experiences to which my mind was insensible. I remember that I could not controvert William James's *The Will to Believe*, but neither could I accept it, for my reason insisted upon a fallacy somewhere which it was not sufficiently acute to detect.

The intellectual life, unless mitigated and softened by spiritual concessions, leads inevitably to pessimism. Judged solely by reason, human existence is vain and leads nowhither. Yet to while away the hours, the reason itself, which robs us of illusions, can devise pursuits which serve to make life tolerable and even amusing. Thus the reason both reveals the futility of existence and provides some solace therefor. This cultured pessimism, which hugs itself and, sitting apart from life, passes ironical judgments upon humanity, becomes, then, the characteristic mood. Colleges are imbued with it and the student, if at all sensitive, inevitably responds to it.

The scholarly life both fascinates and repels a thoughtful young man. The normal impulse of youth is to seek the bracing activities of life with their wealth of spiritual and emotional experience. To do so is natural and human, but withal hazardous, for pain may come of it. Intellectual pursuits afford an anodyne to the sharp pain of life. The cultivated man, with his resources of intellectual diversion, is not so liable as is the ardent participant in the activities of life to suffer from taking the world too seriously. To him life may indeed be

less vivid than is the passionate existence of those who dare to believe and to act, but it will seldom prove vapid. Disillusionment, too, will lose its sting if anticipated, or in itself may serve as a half-humorous theme for refined cynicism and epigram. The academic philosophy preaches that if we would avoid pain we should not live passionately, but dwell always in the realm of reason, wherein every experience is as interesting as another. Thus, though life may bring no great joy, neither will it bring unendurable pain.

Those of academic mind may be divided into two groups, the specialists who ignore ultimate questions, and those tormented with the riddle of existence, who seek in irony and pessimism a refuge from the importunities of doubt. The social philosopher argues that society repeats itself in unending cycles of barbarism, civilization, decay and anarchy. The anthropologist explains the bestial origins of individual and social morality and traces their growth in evolving adaptation to environment. The psychologist shows that the emotions of love and pity, even religion itself, are by-products of matter, or phenomena of matter in motion, like heat. Or, again, they are but aberrations of the human machine which confuse the simple problems of science. These attitudes, expressed or implied, are characteristic of the intellectual life. They lead to pessimism and passivity. They both allure and repel.

There are exceptions to the academic groups into

which I have divided the college staff. It has become fashionable for professors to take a hand in the affairs of the community. With some this participation in worldly affairs is genuine and disinterested, a most wholesome pursuit and an augury of a closer intimacy of the college with the State. With others it implies only the adoption of a fad, such as "efficiency" — this, academically interpreted, the preparation of students for efficiency in business; and in this preparation the college teacher himself assumes the business point of view, mingles with the manufacturers and bankers, laying aside all pretense to a wider vision, and setting up commercial "success" as the ideal and aim of the college education. This note of commercialism begins now to sound as loudly as that of specialization or academic pessimism, but in my college days the commercial fad was new and fighting for recognition. It had little effect on me save to arouse my distaste.

A student is usually unprepared to demonstrate the inadequacy of his instructors, especially if this inadequacy is only a defect of range and the teacher is competent to the degree of his understanding. Moreover, the weight of the institution, the allied powers of learning and tradition, shame puny remonstrances and silence criticism. A college has a tremendous air of infallibility and conviction, and it is an unusual youngster who can hold his own mind against its pressure. A degree of mental independence and considerable courage are

necessary to the young man who would question conventions widely held or attack reverend institutions that bulk large on his horizon. I remember that I criticised my instructors freely in detail, but I do not recollect, as a student, seriously criticising that imposing structure — college. This I accepted, as perforce I must accept so great a thing, as a fact of nature. From it I assimilated a little pessimism, of which I had already enough, a little knowledge and some desire for more, and a little fuel for my socialistic ardor. I suspected some of my most stimulating teachers of being socialists, as probably they were; at any rate, they were not complacent advocates of our present society, upon which they turned the same batteries of ironic criticism that they directed against traditional religion. If, at this time, my socialism was not fanned to a flame, neither was it dampened.

College friendships I have not mentioned. They were more valuable as well as more enjoyable than the course of study. With my friends I discussed the big questions of life and belief that my college classes did not help me to answer, although in the light of fresh information old difficulties often appeared in a new guise. But needful as this intercourse was, our minds were too much alike in many respects, because the product of similar environment and education, to aid to fresh points of view. Rather were we confirmed and strengthened in the mental attitudes we had already assumed. Deeper emotional and spiritual experi-

ences, not to be found in college, were needed to break the casts into which all our thoughts and habits were poured and moulded. This at any rate was true of me.

I think, then, it is apparent why my college years seem in retrospect so unhappy and unprofitable. Perhaps youth must always be unhappy and colleges forever unsatisfactory. Yet I feel that college life might have done more than it did to satisfy my need for guidance, as the religious instruction of my boyhood might have taken me easily over many difficulties which it evaded and might have made my spiritual growth more easy and rapid. I came out of college with my philosophy of life yet to make, though with slightly better mental resources for my task than when I entered.

I must now drop the chronological method of developing my theme. It is no longer possible to trace, step by step, the evolution of my beliefs. Instead, I must trace the large outlines of my philosophy of life, making room for all the things which I feel I must believe, and leaving space for developments not yet realized. This outline I must then endeavor to rationalize so that it will hold together. This, I take it, is the method of all philosophizing. One heaps before him all the things which intellect, emotion and intuition oblige him to believe. Then he seeks to build a structure which can house them all comfortably. Yet this edifice cannot be merely a circus tent

drawn over a collection of monstrosities, incongruous companions which cannot live amicably together unless caged. It must be a designed structure, with various parts harmoniously blended into a unity. Also, it should be an adaptable structure, permitting additions, one to which a wing or ell can be attached without destroying the symmetry of the whole. It must be one in which additional doors and windows may be cut as more light and freer access may seem desirable. I shall now draw the plans of this structure without enumerating chronologically each stage of the creative process. But I shall hold myself free to pursue the autobiographical method whenever my experience will serve to make my exposition clear. My beliefs have sprung both from my experiences and from my thoughts. The one often illuminates the other.

CHAPTER IV

REASON AND INTUITION

THE amateur traveller to philosophy's demesne, gathering about him his indispensables, and those conveniences which he would like to take with him if practicable, is obliged, before disembarking, to devise certain tests for the admission of his intellectual baggage through the customs. He must decide the relative merits of reason and intuition, perhaps to the exclusion of intuition altogether, or to its admission upon terms which will entail the minimum of confusion when employed in conjunction with reason. The most important point of philosophy has to be decided at the very outset. Here it is that systems of thought part company, with mysticism and determinism as the opposed extremes. The question is this: Is the reason alone adequate to solve the riddle of the universe, or are there other means equally legitimate and productive of more satisfactory results?

Scientific methods of thought, which have made possible so great advances of knowledge, have had a far-reaching effect upon philosophy and religion. When I was a college student, Haeckel was the philosopher professed by advanced young gentlemen of a speculative turn. How assiduously he

was read is another matter; yet I think his attitude toward religion and philosophy was accurately sensed. He expressed the more extreme scientific attitude of his day, and even now, when the horizons of thought lift to a larger philosophy, mechanistic conceptions of the universe are still current and many scientists contend either that scientific methods of thought are adequate to explain all of life or, if not, that nothing outside of them is worthy an intelligent man's concern.

I foresee the necessity of a few definitions, which I advance with considerable trepidation. Those definitions which I have encountered upon my casual excursions into philosophy have usually been formidable and frequently enigmatic. Mine will, I trust, be intelligible, but they will probably not be finely discriminating, will not be "sound." Yet they may roughly serve to explain the sense in which I employ terms necessary to my discussion. I shall employ few that are at all technical, for the seeming profundity of philosophic discussion is often due, I suspect, to the fearsome language employed. It would seem possible to write upon questions which are everybody's concern in language intelligible to every one.

A mechanistic conception of the universe I take to be this: The phenomenal world consists, apparently, of two forms of matter — animate and inanimate; let a boulder and a bulldog serve as illustrations. Laws which we are able to ascertain explain the past and present condition of the

boulder and serve as a basis upon which to predict its future. Once we understand all the conditions of the boulder, its properties chemical and physical, it can change in no way which we shall not have anticipated. Because we know what will happen to it we say we understand it, though it is well to note in passing that 'understanding' is employed here in a sense specious rather than profound. We have, indeed, for our convenience only labelled the changes of an unstable object, some of them as yet unrealized.

The bulldog is more complicated and seems superficially quite another thing than the boulder. He is not, apparently, the passive victim of forces operating from without, but has also innate explosive qualities; he enjoys combats with his kind and the pursuit of cats. He is not nearly so predictable as the boulder. He does not stay put but moves constantly, and the curve of his movements cannot be plotted as can that of a comet. Nevertheless, the mechanistic philosopher believes the bulldog as truly an automaton at the mercy of natural forces as is the boulder, though much more complex and therefore more difficult to explain. He avers that the sensory apparatus and brain which differentiate this animate matter from inanimate are really but complex manifestations of chemical and physical interactions. Life is no more different from matter in kind than is heat. Both are matter in a peculiarly complex form of motion.

If one form of life may be explained in terms of chemical forces, it is but a logical second step to assume that the highest form — the most complex that is — man, may be similarly explained. A man is only a bundle of energies produced by a long series of phenomena, the steps of whose progress may be traced. He is no more than the forces of which he is composed, and these are absolutely predetermined by the circumstances of natural law. He reacts upon his environment, to be sure, but only as a plant to the sun, that is to say, automatically. The seeming individuality and freedom of men are but aspects of matter in motion — force — to be explained, once our data are complete, as chemical reactions. Human conduct may then become, ultimately, quite predictable.

It is obvious that in this way of looking at the universe there is a powerful appeal. The entire world, animate and inanimate, is thought of as unified, the expression of force; and the kiss of lovers becomes theoretically as explicable as the flow of a glacier. The charm of such a philosophy is its simplicity; its monitory caution that it is, perhaps, too simple. Yet it warms the logical sense and incites to studiousness. It promises that everything will sometime be humanly explicable, even though that realization is infinitely distant.

Yet any one not swept off his feet by the fascinations of scientific simplicity and logic will

promptly raise objections to mechanism. What place has thought in such a universe? he asks. The answer must be in some such terms as William James suggested as an illustration for this theory of matter: the human machine generates thought as a teakettle steam. It is an analogy which strikes to the root of the difficulty. Thought processes, says the mechanistic philosopher, are conditioned by bodily facts. One arrangement of brain cells produces a philosopher, another an idiot. Thought, in either case, is as certainly conditioned by its antecedents as is the steam in the kettle. But there seems to be a fallacy hidden in the comparison. It does not follow that thought and steam are alike in kind. Both may be dependent upon physical phenomena, in a sense, that is to say, may be accompanied by physical changes in matter; but whereas steam is matter, thought is apparently something quite different, as analogously both sleep and intellectual concentration, quite different states, may cause me to be oblivious to the flight of time. Yet, to waive further discussion of a point not fundamental, we shall pass on, noting only that the physical nature of thought has no more been proved than that life itself is only a complex chemical equation.

However, the criticisms of mechanism, if it is examined only upon ground of its choosing, are relatively superficial. There are graver objections to meet if we pursue the implications of the theory. Waiving all previous arguments, examine upon its

own merits the hypothesis that thought is only a manifestation of force. How, then, can thought turn upon itself and examine its own origin and its own nature, as it seems to do? The steam in the teakettle explains in a sense the application of heat to water, but the explanation lies only in the mind of the observer. We have no reason to suppose that the steam argues from the fact of its existence the laws of expanding gases. Yet this is the phenomenon of human consciousness. My reason, presumably the product of certain bodily conditions, turns upon, examines and explains its origin and its own nature. There is a new factor introduced here. What was a single and unified thing, matter or force, has become magically a twofold thing with the admission of something different in kind. If I say that mind only thinks itself something separate and distinct from matter, that it is conscious only of a *seeming* freedom, and that this very self-deception or illusion is likewise mechanically determined by physical forces, I enter a maze in which the pursuance of the idea results only in vertigo. Surely the world holds mystery enough without attempting to make consciousness disprove its own reality. All speculation becomes fruitless unless we assume at the outset two kinds of phenomena in our world, mysteriously allied and interdependent, to be sure, the thinker and that of which he thinks.

It is possible always that life is only an illusion without ultimate meaning, but if I find it more

profitable to assume the contrary I must take as a basis for thought my own mind and that upon which it feeds. I cannot consider them as one and the same. The mechanistic conception of the universe denies, as it seems to me, all validity to thought, for thought is therein absolutely determined and, if so, cannot rise above itself and pass upon the conditions of its being. The analogy to free will and predestination suggests itself at once. If I believe that everything I do is beyond my own inner control, speculation upon morality becomes fruitless. There is no morality possible in such a philosophy, no better nor worse, but degrees of difference only. However, I do not wish to start the hare of free will versus predestination in this chapter. It suffices to point out that if the universe, including thought and consciousness, is to be explained solely in terms of matter, thought or reason becomes a paradox. Subject and object are hopelessly confused, and all speculation is a waste of breath.

If our purpose is to determine a basis for our methods of thought we must, however, delve a bit deeper if we are to find rock-bottom. Let the relation of physical conditions to processes of thought remain an unsolved problem; waive the objection that thought physically conditioned cannot intelligibly pass upon its own existence, cannot turn and judge itself; there yet remains as an objection to the all-sufficiency of the reason that it realizes its own inadequacy to the determination of abso-

lute truth. I refer, of course, to the recognized limitations of the human reason established metaphysically by Kant. He it was who first gave them dignity and standing, but every child comprehends them in essence, comprehends them better than does the adult who has forgotten the strangeness of life and has begun to accept it at its face value as brought to him by the senses and interpreted by common sense.

It would seem unnecessary to repeat here the substance of Kant's criticism upon the human understanding. But I cannot avoid doing so if I am to make my discussion complete. Moreover, though the validity of Kant's theorems seems never to have been seriously impaired, his definition of the inadequacies of reason is often ignored by scientific philosophers. A contempt for metaphysics and a complacent acceptance of the "law of common sense" as sufficient to explain the universe lead readily to superficial reasoning. The law of common sense is indeed a good law, but its essence is this, that the world we live in is quite different from what it appears to be. It is larger than the world of sense appeals, and even possibly contains elements quite different in kind from those with which we are most familiar.

A child, unhabituated to life but feeling the shades of the prison-house close round him, proceeds naturally to take the measurements of the space in which he is confined, this human existence of ours. He feels there is something outside,

and in this imagined something he is interested. But he is more interested in the world into which he has been thrust. Wordsworth's famous "Ode on Intimations," stripped of all mystical implications, is a faithful record of normal human development, that by which the child is sophisticated through imitation of the ways and practices of human life, and, through the exercise of the reason, in their interpretation. In time he usually forgets his primal state before the seductions of reason had ensnared him. Poets and philosophers are the exceptions, for they can recall the time when the world of seeming reality was not real at all. Upon this memory they nourish the sense of wonder so essential to an open mind.

I think every child passes through a period in which he tests, naïvely, the world of sense phenomena about him. I remember doubting the reality of objects and laying my hand upon a tree to assure myself, by the evidence of a second sense, that it really existed outside of my mind. Touch seemed to convince me; something, at least, was there; the tree was not pure illusion. Another instance in kind was the mental satisfaction with which I welcomed the unexpected. If I chanced upon my cap hung properly upon its hook instead of lying on a chair as I last remembered it, I was pleased. It must be a real hat, not the product of my imagination, for it then would have been where I thought it to be. I believe this is the normal experience of childhood. Literature

will furnish similar instances, and any one who can think himself back to his childish attitude toward the world will find even more convincing verification. And what does this demonstrate if not the child's attempt to become at home with life and believe in life's reality?

When the child endeavors to measure the adequacy of his mental powers by applying them to an explanation of the universe beyond his immediate ken, he becomes unwittingly a metaphysician. He asks a first cause for the world and for life, for in the world which he sees about him every phenomenon has a cause. He thinks, too, that the universe must persist "forever," and tries to conceive the meaning of the word, but cannot. It is as long a time as he can imagine and added to that other periods equally long. He cannot grasp it in its entirety. He can only advance toward it, for it is an illusory goal, never to be reached. The first cause is equally evasive. The child asks the cause of God and, were this possible of answer, would ask a second cause precedent. The series of causes must be pushed back in imagination forever. This is so because it is impossible to think of a something emerging causelessly from nothing. The world of reason is the world of cause and effect. But apparently reason can deal only with a definite though unlimited number of links in an endless chain. The beginning and the end are incomprehensible. For reason they do not exist. Thence arises the paradox that it

is both impossible to think of anything as causeless and equally impossible to determine its ultimate cause. Human reason is inadequate to the task which it none the less sets itself.

Equally futile are all efforts to conceive of infinite space. The fatal "forever" reappears inevitably in the attempt. In imagination I project myself to the periphery of the vast sphere which embraces the sidereal universe. Beyond is a gray immensity of space. I am upon the utmost edge of matter, but space does not end. Though I fly a thousand years on the wings of thought, until the milky way grows dim and melts into night, there will still be an immensity beyond. What then? My mind cannot conceive infinity. Yet it is unable also to believe the universe a finite, limited thing, for always the mind seeks the barrier it erects and overleaps it to explore the beyond. Space and causation, like time, are to human reason unintelligible terms, never to be grasped.

It was from these paradoxes, or "antinomies," as he called them, that Kant concluded the human reason to be an agent of restricted powers, at home in a world of space relations and causation, a tool of practical rather than speculative possibilities. Bergson would add that the reason is the product of the world in which it finds itself, and is thus unprepared to assume the detached position necessary should it attempt a final explanation of the universe. Our intellectual limitations are the

molds into which are poured all our experiences. Only with the product of its own making can the reason deal. As to what lies back of this seeming reality it can only speculate, and its speculations are only analogies based upon its experience of the actual. Reason, then, is forced to recognize and admit its inadequacy, unassisted, to explain the universe completely. A part it can explain very well in terms of its own making. When it goes farther than this it comes to an impasse, a paradox, a dilemma. This it cannot accept, for it is assured by the nature of its own being that there must be some explanation for everything. It is as though it came to a wall and said: I know there is something beyond this, for there is always something beyond every wall, but what it is I can never know, for the wall is of my own erection, and only when I cease to be as I now am can I pass beyond it.

What, then, must be the practical outcome of our obligatory conclusion that reason, adapted to a universe of cause and effect manifested in space relations, is inadequate to the larger explanation our natures crave — that unifying principle which will clarify all the obscurities of mind and soul? Either we must cease altogether to attempt a final explanation or we must seek assistance in other quarters. If we renounce all but reason there remains the field of science, the classification and enumeration of the phenomena of the natural world, verifiable by experiment and explicable by

intellectual processes. This is a vast domain, to be sure; but if we seek one yet vaster, that in which lie philosophy and religion we must find in our own natures another path than that of the unaided reason whereby to attain our goal.

It may be profitable before considering the difficult questions incident to this enlargement of the means of speculation to examine superficially the mental processes of philosophers. The common man conceives a philosopher to be a cold and unemotional person who devises systems of thought which ignore the feelings, the desires and the aspirations of humanity. The truth sought and the method and temper of the seeker he conceives to be purely abstract, divorced from human weakness and inadequacy. The philosopher's actual course, whatever his ideals, is quite other than this; it is personal to him, is the result of temperamental bias, as brief reflection will make manifest. An extreme instance of thought dependent upon temperament is the philosophic system of Schopenhauer, which is an elaboration and justification of his pessimism. His pessimism does not derive from his philosophy, but rather is his philosophy the outgrowth of his pessimism. Again, in the philosophy of Fechner, a scientist who was also a man of poetic temperament, we find a pantheistic system not conceived out of hand by any process of reasoning, but first outlined in the creative imagination and then rationalized. In such philosophers as Descartes and Kant the

reason is supreme, even though, as in Kant's philosophy, the reason is shown to be a circumscribed power. The choice of this faculty as the means to the formulation of a system and the exclusion or omission of the other elements of consciousness is, however, a temperamental preference. It is the choice the scientist makes and within its necessary limitations is perfectly defensible. The desire of the scientist is that of the artist, to free his problem of irrelevancies. Thus to the scientist, whose business is the study of matter, many things are irrelevant which to another are pertinent. The beauty of light is not the concern of the physicist analyzing light. His problem demands the exclusion of this, to him, irrelevant quality.

The philosopher likewise may elect to study the universe solely from the view-point of reason. It is a legitimate restriction of the field of experience, provided the admission is made that a philosophy thus exclusive can never realize complete truth. The philosopher who elects to follow reason, the scientist who relies solely on scientific processes of thought, are beyond criticism, unless they profess to do more than their means permit. The scientist turned philosopher who endeavors to explain the universe completely in terms of reason has neglected to examine the tool with which he works, a tool adapted to certain uses and infinitely capable of refinement, but forever inadequate to the greater task.

So conceived, philosophy is based upon a tem-

peramental choice of method. Nevertheless, in the expression of a system, in the organization of truths apprehended by whatever means, the reason has a vital place. It builds the rational structure upon which the temperamental preference of the philosopher stakes its justification and defense. That the reason and temperament work together in this wise we can observe by a consideration of any human belief. We rightly suspect the opponent of woman's suffrage of unfortunate experiences with womankind, however he may justify his attitude by citations from economic and social history. That I favor the cause springs from a different temperament and a happier experience. But in support of my belief I likewise can rear a logical fabric of greater or less strength.

Philosophy is inevitably based on introspection. Who is there who does not consider his brain and his ability to reason as a thing apart from his essential self, a tool with which the real self works? Does he not fear the loss of his reason, feel chagrin at his own stupidity? The reason is his mental garment, in which he desires to present a neat appearance before his fellows. He is sensitive to its cut and quality. But his real self sits aloof, contemptuous often of his inadequate brain with which it must, perforce, work. This feeling that reason and the essential self are two, not one, is a matter of individual analysis. I believe it to be universal, though I can see that it is a more compelling, a more conscious experience with one man

than with another. Yet with any one it can be noted that a deep emotional experience will serve to revolutionize his attitude toward life and cause him to build a new philosophy in justification of his changed outlook. The reason is only a tool in the process.

But if we admit, as I have admitted, that reason is inadequate of itself to explain the universe, and that it takes its orders from a deeper-lying authority, we have then the difficult task of determining what is this something that exists within us. This is a harder problem than to analyze the universe by the reason alone, however difficult that may be. Precise-minded persons shrink from the task, for conclusions can never here be so definite and positive as in the exact realm of the reason. On the other hand, it will be possible, by the admission of human powers other than reason, to devise a broader theory of the origin and method of the universe than could be the product of the unaided reason: a theory more flexible and with greater possibilities within itself of change and growth. So elastic a scheme, if it can be devised, is surely desirable in our imperfect world and for a race of beings scarcely evolved from savagery.

I do not wish to be led far afield in the definition of terms which may be sufficiently clear and exact without much discussion. Yet I wish to distinguish carefully between reason and intuition as means whereby we arrive at beliefs. Therefore, at the risk of elaborating the obvious, I shall

endeavor to emphasize the fundamental points of difference between the two and offer a concrete illustration which will make their dissimilarity clear. Reason, which guides most of our actions, is a process of generalization and prediction based upon the observation of cause and effect in natural phenomena. The uniformity and consistency of natural phenomena lead us, after repeated observations, to predict consequences as yet unrealized from causes with which we are familiar, or from others which we think analogous to them. So certain are we of the truth of our predictions that we are willing to act upon them as though they had been actually realized.

The reasoning process and the steps of its advance from purely physical generalizations and predictions to those which are abstract follows some such course as this: I observe that in my experience night has always followed day; I generalize and declare that this day, like others, will also be followed by night. It is a prediction verifiable by the fact. There is here no element of causation, however; I do not declare that day is the cause of night. This extension of reason may be observed in the following generalization: When I drink coffee late at night I have difficulty in going to sleep; therefore, coffee is the cause of sleeplessness. This generalization I can test by repeated experiments, though my prediction of the effect of coffee in any particular instance is less certain than that night will succeed day; sometimes I may go to sleep de-

spite the coffee, and at other times I may be sleepless from unknown causes, even when I refrain from it. However, I extend the reasoning process yet further and declare that if I refrain altogether from coffee I shall sleep better, be healthier and live longer than if I persist in its use. Here my prediction can never be verified with certainty, however much faith I have in it, for I have no means of comparing the consequences of my action with those of the alternative course which I did not follow. I cannot both drink coffee and go without it and so compare the results. Employing analogy as well as generalization, I may, however, extend the uses of reason to one further employment. Excitements of any sort, I may argue, are unwholesome, for they, like coffee, disturb the placid temper essential to healthy existence. I find that to read novels is exciting; therefore I desist from them in the hope of enjoying a healthier mental life. The fallacy in this argument, due to unreliable generalization and questionable analogy, does not concern us here. Observe only that reason has extended its range from physical causation and verifiable predictions to physical causation with unverifiable predictions, and finally to the assumption of causation in the realm of mind and predictions based thereon which are unverifiable. Reason in its higher uses passes beyond the physical world into a realm of abstract speculation which it seeks to make its own with equal certainty. It widens its scope in this fashion because of the

faith which its practical employment in the physical world has inspired in its methods.

Let me make these points clear by citing an illustration. Suppose I consider the problem of human immortality in the light of reason. My first method would be to verify my belief, should I hold it, by recourse to facts, the phenomena of nature which appeal to the senses. Thus it is conceivable that I might adduce evidence of spirit communication, evidence not dependent upon my own unaided senses, for these might mislead me, but such as other minds would be forced to accept as true and as capable of but the single interpretation which I have given them. Evidence of weight might be the appearance of an apparition to several persons, an act promised before death and performed subsequent to it, or a spirit communication verified by the discovery of a hidden or mislaid object. These facts, unless open to some other interpretation, would be reasonable proof of the persistence after death of human personality. In this process, the sensible effects would be attributable to a cause not certainly known, but so like causes which we do know in our world of sense that we should readily attribute to them a human though invisible agent.

I may, however, because of my confidence in the processes of reason, go a step farther and attribute a sequel to the phenomenon of death for which I can adduce no evidence verifiable by the senses. My method is based on analogy and generalization.

I argue perhaps that, though the flower dies, it lives again in its seed, or that the grub becomes a butterfly. These transformations I liken to death, and draw my conclusion that death, too, produces some new form of life sprung from that which seems to cease. But I can offer no direct evidence in support of this conclusion, nothing so tangible even as a purported spirit communication. I am forced to pin my faith to the unseen conclusion of my analogy upon the universality and consistency of natural law. Furthermore, I have based my argument upon the supposed resemblance of the life of the flower and the grub to human existence, and the complete aptness of the comparisons is essential to the validity of my arguments. If the analogies are untrue in any particular, if the likeness is not complete, I have abused rather than utilized reason, and my conclusions are unsound.

Let me approach the same problem intuitionally to illustrate not only the method of intuition but also the meaning of the word. If my belief in immortality is the result of intuition, I stake my faith on an inner conviction that exists without apparent cause. It is simply there, a fact of my consciousness unverifiable by proofs and unsupported, it may be, even by such analogies as the reasoning process may draw from sensible phenomena to things unseen. The faith I hold may, however, be strengthened by my recognition of a similar belief as held by others. If it is a conviction peculiar to me it is less trustworthy than if

others hold it also. Here the reason comes in as a partial support, for I argue, whether consciously or unconsciously, that a conviction shared by many or by all human beings is a fact of life, something more than a unique instance; it is a generalization and so to be thought of as a law of life, a truth. Yet here, again, the recognition of my belief as one held by others may not be based on an open and universal declaration of its existence, but upon a tacit analogy only. Virtually I argue that what I feel to be true others who resemble me in many verifiable respects must also feel to be true. I support my belief by a generalization born of my experience of life, that human beings are alike in all essentials. Thus intuition utilizes reason.

Bergson's theory that life, casting about for a means to a more rapid advance, has developed the reason to supplement instinctive action, enables us to follow the process whereby intuitions are seized upon and criticised by the intellect. The ideal of human brotherhood, a typical instance, springs thus from the reservoirs of inarticulate emotion and finds its first expression in the dreams of seer and poet. The seer proclaims the day when his vision will be realized, not justifying his ideal by logic or reason, but expounding it as a revelation of divine truth. From the response which a formulated ideal elicits from those sensitive to spiritual influences a social purpose is ultimately established, and the intuitive prompting, now well within the range of reason, becomes the theme of

intellectual activity: systems of conduct and institutions of government whereby the ideal may be realized are advanced, their reasonableness defended, and what was once the radiant inspiration of a single dreamer becomes a convention, a commonplace, though its complete realization in human institutions may yet be remote.

The faculty of intuition is the pioneer in the exploration of the spiritual possibilities of life. It is ever bringing new ideals from the realm of the unknown, the spiritual hinterland of life. These are then subjected to the criticisms of reason and in time are incorporated in human conduct and in social institutions. But though these steps in the progress of ideals, and this relation of intuition to reason, are intelligible, the explanation of the process remains still a mystery; yet no more a mystery than the evolution of all natural phenomena whose progress and changes we may trace and predict, but whose inner urgency, the necessity by which they came to be and change as they do, is forever obscure.

Failure to realize that science and religion move upon different planes of experience is one cause, the chief, of the fruitless controversies which ensue when scientist and religious thinker engage in debate. "The plane of science is determined by causation and space relations; it is concerned with matter, with the world of tangible things. The plane of religion is determined by causation and emotional experience. The two planes have one

common determinant. They intersect, and along the line of intersection it is possible to arrive at mutual understanding and agreement. But in the main their planes of experience differ, and therefore an argument upon a problem of one in terms of the other is necessarily fatuous. Better, perhaps, the figure may be extended, and the problems of science be likened to those of plane geometry, those of religion to solid geometry, for religion includes all the factors of experience: its problems are three-dimensional; the plane of science, determined by two factors, cuts through the three-dimensional body. Many points they have in common, therefore, but more they have not. The figure is further illuminating in its implications if we assume, as we may, that truth, which we vainly seek, is determined in part by other and unknown factors, and the conclusions of religion, based upon too few factors, those of limited human experience, are necessarily incomplete and but relatively true. Truth, the ideal, may well be a four-dimensional problem, or one of n factors even. We with our restricted experience, that confined to our terrestrial existence, can then but hope that our conclusions, born of our own best deductions from the factors known to us, may not be incongruous with the larger truth which exists without and which we may not completely know.

It is apparent that to include intuitions in any philosophic scheme is at once to invite difficulties. What are these beliefs I hold apparently without

cause? Are all equally trustworthy? Are they consistent one with another? And if they are not, which of two contradictory intuitions shall I accept, which deny? To obviate some of these perplexities it is desirable to devise tests for the validity of an intuition. I can think of three which are convenient and seemingly just:

1. The value of an intuition is dependent upon the degree of its universality. An intuition widely held excites more respect than another held by only a few persons.

2. An intuition is trustworthy to the degree of the mental power and poise and the spiritual experience of those confessing to it.

3. An intuition is significant in so far as it has had an elevating effect on human conduct and has contributed to the progress of the race — facts admittedly difficult to determine.

In short, an intuition is to be respected according to its popularity, the character of its friends and the quality of its works. We judge it as though it were a human being.

Notwithstanding the reasonableness and practicability of these tests for intuitions, each one of us acts repeatedly in accordance with inner convictions which, so far as we know, are not sanctioned by the conduct and beliefs of others. The man fired by an intuitional prompting to a great faith and mighty deeds can never be wholly accounted for. To others he is inexplicable, as though he were sensitive to spiritual influences to which the

rest of the world is deaf. If he believes sufficiently in his inner vision he will live to realize it in some way which will make it known to others, or he will die in the attempt. We regard Christ as one with unusual intuitions, which we may characterize, if we choose, as divine. He died for the faith within him, and since his death the world has half believed and half doubted the worth of his revelations. Some men have accepted them to the degree of attempting to imitate his life. Others, while professing an equal faith, have, apparently, no real understanding of him. Their intuitions do not accord with his.

It is an uncertain world into which we plunge if we accept intuitions as of value in the formulation of a philosophy. It is not easy here to be definite and positive. The lovers of reason object to so difficult a task, and eschew a philosophy whose outlines of necessity must be blurred. Better, they think, to restrict the problem and enjoy the satisfaction which comes from the logical conquest of an idea. For many, the attempt to lay the broadest possible foundations for a philosophy is a theme for ridicule. To the scholastically minded, all believers in anything but the powers of reason are mystics, and so reprehensible. But the mystic, so styled, may with equal justice retort: "And you, my opponent, are a logician, or a scientist." No one of the terms is properly a reproach. It is, however, significant of the trend of thought of the present day that Bergson's philosophy has been

received with so great popular enthusiasm. He declares that the secret of life is not to be grasped by the reason but by the intuitions, and in this he is in natural accord with the common man, who would himself declare as much were he a philosopher and trained to the analysis and expression of his beliefs.

Distrust of the emotions and intuitions and a consequent effort to subject them, as lawless elements of our nature, to the domination of our intellects, is not a tendency peculiar to this age of evolutionary science. It is expressed in the philosophy and literature of other ages, and springs, naturally enough, from the human passion for definiteness and manageableness. It is inevitably doomed to a half-success, for emotionalism ultimately revolts and, if the restraint has been severe, swings to the opposite extreme, as witness the sentimentality which was the reaction from eighteenth-century scepticism. In any age, curiously little recognition is accorded the necessity of reconciling intuition and emotion on the one hand with the reason on the other and establishing a working relation profitable to both. The effort to discipline the emotions by the reason, and to warm and fertilize reason with the vital emotions, perhaps by means of art, would seem in the light of history to be well directed. To establish a balance between the two forces whereby man lives and grows is an ideal as old as human thought and art.

It has been my own experience to pass from a

stage in which reason seemed the sole means of determining belief to a second in which I was obliged to admit other elements of our nature. Life forced me to seek knowledge in the world of spirit as well as in that of reason — this because mere reason failed to satisfy me or even to give promise of ultimate satisfaction. Upon my recognition of the difficulty which beset me, a fuller and richer life became mine, one in which emotion and spiritual effort were significant of something ultimate and universal and so infinitely worth while. With the keener emotional life that ensued came, too, a better understanding of human existence and its place in the scheme of things. This newer belief I here attempt to formulate and to relate to the beliefs which reason alone has taught me. I am no enemy to reason. Upon its exercise and growth much of human welfare depends. But I think of it always as a tool. A man is forced by life to feel and to act. He has then to examine his conduct and to formulate principles for his further guidance. The reason performs this work, organizing, clarifying and systematizing. A philosopher resembles a grammarian, who explains the usages of speech, codifies them, and exercises a restraining influence upon the tendency to wayward change and the introduction of new forms. But, in the main, philosopher and grammarian are followers only. Life flows on in response to its profounder impulses; the philosopher arranges its products in his cabinet of specimens. Yet the man

who has clarified his views of life by determining just where he stands, that is to say, by formulating a philosophy, is better able to choose his path amid conflicting impulses and to act wisely than he would be had he not made up his mind and made his convictions known to himself. Why this is so I shall attempt to make clear in another place. For the moment it suffices that experience shows, to my own satisfaction at least, that this is a true statement.

One point further and I have done with this chapter, which is nothing more than an apology for relying upon intuition as well as upon reason for the formulation of beliefs. The course I have followed from adherence upon reason alone to a reliance upon intuitions and spiritual experience is characteristic, I judge, of those for whom I presume to speak. I observe in most men as they grow older a lessening tendency to dogmatize. It is the young man who most whole-heartedly refuses to listen to the claims of religion and philosophy. Reason suffices for a time, but after a while it ceases to satisfy, and logician and scientist look to other fields of experience, unwillingly, often, but of necessity. There are, of course, many exceptions to this generalization, those in whom too great dependence upon reason leads to mental hardening and atrophy of soul. It is a danger inherent in the intellectual life, one to be minimized only by a wide human experience and an active participation in the common affairs of the world.

CHAPTER V

FREE-WILL AND DETERMINISM

A MODEST man must blush to take a hand in so difficult a controversy as that of free-will and determinism. Great theologians and philosophers have fought a drawn battle upon the theme, and though victory seems to perch momentarily on the banners of one party or the other, some fresh turn of thought, some new fact of science or theory of philosophy precipitates the old struggle anew. The individual himself cannot always be sure of his own belief. At the tide of his fortunes he feels himself the master of his fate, and at their ebb only a bubble poured by the Eternal Saki. The literatures of the world bear witness to this human indecision, establishing the seeming paradox that man believes both that he is and is not free. Though a review of some of the points suggested by literature and philosophy can add little new to thought, it is a profitable exercise for those who seek to determine their own beliefs and to reconcile seemingly contradictory attitudes toward life.

Folk literature abounds with stories of predestined tragedy. Born under an evil star a man is foredoomed to a tragic act and an unhappy

death. All human effort to avoid the fatal event is vain, for the means of its accomplishment cannot be foreseen. Thus the stories of Œdipus and Siegfried and innumerable tales from Indian mythology. What the gods decree must be, man cannot evade. And even the gods themselves are bound, for back of Zeus are the Fates, back of Woden the Norns. These curious similarities in the treatment of destiny in the myths and folk literatures of peoples seem, then, to reflect a fundamental human conviction, one either intuitive in its origin or else born of universal human experience. The effort to discover which is the more probable explanation is worth making.

The experiences of primitive man go far to explain his belief in predestination. Savage peoples are much at the mercy of the elements. Famine, pestilence, warring men and ravening beasts encompass them, and that man is fortunate who lives to see his son full grown and fitted to take his father's place in the tribal councils. Death, in any case, is unavoidable, a miserable death, usually. Tribal custom, traditional religion and social usages are equally binding upon the savage. He is the most captive of men, the slave of nature, of convention and of his own habits and convictions. This state of bondage is reflected in his songs and in the legends of his heroes. Valiant men war against inevitable defeat. Life may be made heroic, but its final overthrow is certain.

Yet an element of freedom seems to be implied

in the most fatalistic epics. The man doomed to slay his father is not doomed to do so wittingly. The act may be predestined but the doer's motives are his own. His morality and bravery are honorable whatever acts the gods may cause him to commit. Sohrab is slain by Rustum, but the deed is, humanly speaking, an accident. It is true that men seemingly honorable commit evil deeds and prove cowards. These blemishes in his hero the primitive historian condones by laying them to some magical cause intervening between the man's true nature and his occasional deed. Tristram drinks the fatal love-potion, and Sigurd wears the coat of mail which makes him immune to injury but which, for a time, dulls his will and makes him a sluggard. Folk literature endeavors to draw a distinction between action that is fated to be and conduct which grows from a man's own choice. Heroism consists in the conflict of good purposes with unhappy destiny. What a man's fate is the gods determine. What he is he determines for himself. In so far as he is true to his own best nature he is a hero, and though he cannot overcome the gods he may defy them.

The Prometheus myth casts an interesting light upon the attitude of the primitive Greeks to their world and to fate. Prometheus, the friend of man, steals the sacred fire by means of which men are enabled to throw off some of the fetters with which they are bound by the gods, that is to say, the yoke of natural forces. Prometheus, the

liberator, "nailed on the blown world's plunging prow," suffers æons of torment for his theft but he is fated sometime to be freed. His liberation seems to symbolize a world set free, in which man will be the moulder of his own destiny and no longer a plaything of the gods. It is a curiously compelling fable, expressing what I shall endeavor to bring out subsequently, that freedom is an evolving condition and that men can grow into it. Intuitively they feel before them the path to freedom even while conscious of the fetters which make their present bondage all too apparent.

In the main, however, primitive literature expresses the inevitable first reaction of the individual toward life, the feeling that in the large things he is the victim of forces too great for his understanding and control, but that in his conduct from day to day, in his morality that is, he is free to do as he wills, to be generous or cruel, brave or cowardly, to steal or let alone, to lie or to be truthful. This relative or partial freedom the civilized man feels yet more consciously in much of his conduct. If, however, he is the victim of a vice or habit he realizes that his independence of action is not complete. He may see himself doomed to an inevitable act; he may know he will do a thing he loathes. Yet is it paradoxical to say that there is some freedom even here, for he can resist the inevitable or yield without a contest? The struggle not to yield, however unavailing, is in itself the declaration of a partial freedom of choice, the

declaration of a hope. Nor is this groundless, for a seemingly iron-bound habit is sometimes overcome and the man is liberated through self-conquest to a larger and freer world.

What are the instances in which this seeming exercise of freedom is possible? Obviously every one of us is often a slave to conditions without being aware of the fact. The society into which I am born, the very structure of my body and brain, the nature of human existence in all its complex manifestations determine my actions to a large extent. In most of my acts I move automatically, unconscious that any course other than the one I pursue is possible. Apparently if I am unconscious of an alternative course of action in any instance I am so far enslaved; just as my mind, adapted to certain methods of thought, can look upon the universe only in terms of time and space and causal relationships. Only as I am conscious of a choice does any genuine freedom become possible. The rest is reflex action, habit, convention, or whatever term you choose. Thus the criminal of vicious ancestry and degrading environment is little responsible for what he does; that is to say, he is only to a slight degree conscious that two courses of action lie open to him, the vicious and the good. But if he is conscious of a choice, what then? Is he free or not?

The victim of evil habits who fights ineffectually against his sin seemed, I said, to glimpse freedom as a prisoner may gaze upon the open sky from the

barred window of his cell. Is this sense that freedom really exists, if not for himself then for others more fortunate, an illusion? Is the ease with which I select one of two courses of action which present themselves to me illusion also? There is an old story of the Calvinist who, as he came upon a puddle in the road, said: "I was predestined to pass to the left of this; therefore I shall go to the right." The story is indicative of the human desire to feel free, to be master of conduct even while conscious of restrictions. Freedom seems to lie without somewhere, to be attained, if not wholly at least in part, by effort. Yet the subtle reasoner assures us that the desire to be free is in itself illusory. The man who chose the right side of the road was really predestined so to hesitate and choose. He could do only that. However great his seeming freedom of action, he was as bound as the veriest slave led into battle for a cause of which he knows nothing. There is no answer to this refinement of argument save that, if it be sound, all the universe is illusion — as many millions of human beings think to be the case — and this interesting existence of ours a Chinese nest of boxes. We open one to find ourselves still captive in another. Never are we really free. If there is any reality it is beyond human knowledge, for we are but shadow shapes contrived for God's pastime in eternity.

Yet if we dismiss the illusion theory as an unprofitable speculation, however plausible, freedom

of the will, or seeming freedom, varies greatly with individuals, and even in the consciousness of a single man. For the awareness of choice in conduct is something that grows with use. Once I am led to question social conventions or to criticise absurdities of dress or manners, the freer I am to question further and to act in accordance with my new understanding. I can become an unconventional person, one who sees an alternative to every social observance. In the realm of morals, once I hesitate in the performance of a familiar act, the more likely I am to pause a second time. Once I have questioned the morality of cheating the street-car conductor of my fare when he overlooks me, the chances are that I am on the road to a state of painful honesty. On every subsequent occasion I shall question my conduct more determinedly and end — if I have not a sense of humor — by returning conscience money to the company. Freedom of conduct is a growth, like everything else in the world. It waxes strong with exercise. Complete freedom is doubtless unattainable, but it is a goal which can be infinitely approached.

Is not the growth of human belief in freedom reflected in the history of civilization and in literature? Henley's lines,

> "I am the master of my fate,
> I am the captain of my soul,"

are essentially a cry of despair. He feels himself the victim of a force greater than himself. But he

is master of his defiance. God and fate may be stronger than he, but it is a brute mastery. Morally he is their superior. Our modern philosophy of success, our passion to master external conditions and to make the forces of nature our servants, express our truer conviction that we can free ourselves from whatever bonds we are aware of, and that it is our duty to do so. In so far as it expresses this theme, modern literature sounds a less pessimistic, a more heroic note than either ancient or mediæval literature. Pessimism creeps in when the modern thinker tells himself that this seeming growth in freedom is only self-deception.

That the growth of this belief in freedom keeps step with the mastery of external nature could, I believe, be demonstrated. The question is not, of course, altogether so simple as this. But the freedom which scientific advance has given us, freedom of movement and of economic conquest, has weakened somewhat that fear of nature which fed human belief in determinism. The gods, who were only personifications of natural forces, are gone forever. We have become greater than they and control them. We aspire to know God himself and, if it seems best to us, to act in defiance of him. Yet strangely enough, in thus freeing the human spirit we have fashioned a new prison in scientific determinism. This is not the old house of bondage, however, for while it denies ultimate freedom it premises a practical freedom of movement in the natural world and apparent freedom

of choice in conduct. It leads on the one hand to scientific and economic conquest, on the other to philosophic pessimism. But these new fetters are not so binding as the old. Determinism is the belief only of those thoroughly imbued with the scientific spirit. These are relatively few. The world at large sees in the conquest of nature a possibility of human freedom never before realized. The Prometheus allegory promises to be no longer a myth but a prophecy. The modern world is hopeful despite its religious doubts.

I am not qualified to say much of the scientific bases of determinism, though certain objections to it may legitimately be raised by one not versed in scientific thought. I gather, also, that the recent discoveries of science have weakened the force of generalizations long thought universally binding. The forces which govern the universe become more enigmatic the more we know of them, and the discovery of such phenomena as those of radioactivity go far to shake scientific complacency and lead to constant readjustment of fundamental theories. Disregarding these, however, I find in physiological determinism more difficulties to overcome than in older and simpler beliefs. If physical conditions absolutely determine thought, how can we account for the influence of an idea upon the mind of another, or for the phenomena of religious conversion? Is thought precipitated by physiological change? If I declare this to be the case I make a dogmatic assertion only. I cannot detect

a physiological change in most instances, and even when this is possible, as in the quickened heart-beat that comes with strong emotion, I am not justified in assuming that the heart-beat produces the emotion rather than the emotion the heart-beat. Nor in differences of temperament in two men can I put my finger upon a different nervous constitution. If difference there is, it is too subtle to be defined and I have, therefore, no right to assume it save as a hypothesis and a guide to experiment. This is, of course, a legitimate scientific method of work, but I am not justified in basing my philosophy upon an unverified hypothesis.

The appeal of materialism lies in its seeming unity and simplicity. For a dualism of brain and thought, of body and spirit, it substitutes a single principle embracing and unifying both. But the seeming gain in intelligibility is fallacious. In this and the previous chapter I have touched upon some of the obstacles which physiological determinism encounters: the difficulty of a mind which feels itself free proving its own absolute dependence upon and identity with bodily states being chief. This conception leads the philosopher to a vicious closed circle. He finds an older theory simpler and less restrictive, that of a personality lying back of the brain and working through it, dependent upon its operations as we are dependent upon our muscles, but directing and utilizing our mental processes for its own ends. The body does not always rise to our demands upon it. Sometimes

it fails us; so, too, a diseased or imperfect brain can do little in response to the animating spirit. Or if we change the figure, the human spirit pours through the brain as light through glass. But the glass differs in its degree of clarity. In the finest intelligences we conceive of the personality as shining through undimmed and undistorted. Such a theory may seem more mysterious than that of physiological determinism, but it is not really so. Difficulties enough, however, lie in either case. The philosopher chooses the hypothesis which seems to have the greater possibilities of development. Determinism leads too soon into a cul-de-sac.

Materialism, determinism, the mechanistic conception of life — terms implying much the same fundamental attitude toward the phenomena of the universe — are not normal human beliefs. They are the product of artificial conditions, that is, of the intellect developed to such a degree that it is no longer in balance with other human powers. I do not know that a psychology of the thinker as a human type has ever been attempted. Yet the specialist with his hobby would seem to offer a fine field for pathological research. Thinkers become thought-bound, just as strong men become muscle-bound. Balance and perspective are lost, and the mental condition resulting approaches monomania. Religious fanaticism we think nowadays a form of insanity. The fanatic is unbalanced. But the theme need not be religious only.

Any idea, any habit of thought, may lead to a distortion identical in kind, and the fanaticism of the philosopher and scientist is only our modern form of a disease as old as man.

Yet what I have just said is a little misleading. Happily we are so constituted that most of us do not in active life consistently apply the theories which we profess to believe. The various fields of thought in which we delve do not greatly influence our domestic or social activities. We are different beings in our homes and recreations from what we are in our laboratories and studies. It would be a sad world were this not so, for otherwise we might evolve into those monstrosities pictured by Mr. H. G. Wells as inhabiting the interior of the moon. Our lunacies are partial only, and the activities of life enforce a practical sanity. Levin in *Anna Karenina*, after fruitless efforts to find mental and spiritual rest in the scientific and philosophic thought of his day, is enlightened by the simple remark of a peasant. He finds in himself the answer to his difficulties. All of us have this recourse, and when we are distracted by too much theory, worn by the intellect spinning in a vacuum, we can return to our intuitive unreasoned beliefs, which assure us that the reason is not all of man. We need not destroy the machine to which we have become enslaved, as did the Erewhonians, but we can free ourselves from its domination and make it the servant, not the master.

Let us turn now to another aspect of determin-

ism, its relation to morality. Unless we believe in the human power to choose, unless we have faith in the partial freedom of the will, we can have no belief in what we call morality. Personal responsibility for action is meaningless if divorced from freedom of choice. We recognize this fact in our laws, in our treatment of the criminal insane, and in the judgments we pass daily upon all human conduct. If our sense of freedom is delusive, all discussion of morality becomes a waste of breath. It can have no practical value, cannot aid us to live better, for conduct is then only the product of fixed forces which no speculation can change from their predestined course. Along every avenue of human expression we arrive only at illusion once we believe in determinism. Did we really believe it, were we consistent, we should refuse all unpleasant effort, never force ourselves to think when to do so seemed disagreeable, never do an unselfish act. Yet all these things we do, governed in part by reason but more by intuitive impulses. Our actual conduct commits us to many things which our reason cannot justify or explain. Morality goes deeper than reason, though explicable in part by reason.

The inadequacies of determinism and the necessity of belief in at least a partial freedom of the will may be realized in yet other ways. The method of attack is speculative, but there is evidence to support it. Let us approach the problem inductively. The most striking result of bio-

logical research and of our evolutionary theories of life is not that animate forms may be classified nor that one and all are the product of determinable forces. The striking fact is that all forms of life are different. Parent and offspring, however much alike, are never exact counterparts. Any species or genus is merely an aggregation of individuals all different one from another, but penned by the scientist within certain prescribed limits for convenience in classification. Any inanimate form of matter may be, for aught I know, a perfect duplication of another, and two grains of sand be indistinguishable to all tests. But animate forms are all different, and the higher the type — the more advanced it is in the evolutionary process — the greater and more marked the individual differences become. Were the force of life which expresses itself in these individual and varied forms conscious and endowed with purpose, we should say that this purpose was to create as many, as varied and as complex forms of life as possible: to produce variations infinitely.

In order to pursue this train of thought further, tentatively assume a purpose back of the phenomena of life. Further, assume this purpose to be — as evidence seems to point — the infinite production of new and individual forms of life. By what means could the life force realize its purpose? Would individuals directly produced by fixed forces and conditions, however many and complex, be as varied as those equally the product

of these conditions but possessed also of some initiative and freedom? It is apparent that, once an incalculable factor is introduced into the equation, a greater number of results is possible than if the terms, however numerous, are certain. In one case the results are infinite, in the other finite. The greater the freedom of choice introduced, the more rich, varied and individual become the resultant life forms.

A simple illustration pertinent to this hypothesis may be drawn from our experiments in education. We have learned through experience — as we might have guessed had we been intelligent — that a uniform, mechanical system of education which does not discriminate individual needs develops an unvaried, uniform and inferior product. We realize variety to be desirable, and we now shape our educational methods — when we are wise — to develop individual possibilities rather than to crush them and reduce all children to a dead level of uniformity. Equally in our tests of character we commend departures from the commonplace and usual by such epithets as "distinguished," "genius," "exceptional." Perhaps our sneaking liking for criminals is due to this same cause, an instinctive realization that vitality and excellence are born of the unusual, the degree in which the individual rises above the possibilities of ordinary men. Each one of us strives to be different from his kind, usually with small success, but witnessing in his intuitive desire not alone the

wish for admiration but the force of life itself, which seeks to make us realize our individual possibilities to the utmost.

Probably a comparison of our own with relatively ancient times in the endeavor to demonstrate that the range of human variation is increasing can produce no positive conclusion. But it is safe to assume that a highly developed civilization, despite its machine production, its tenements and factories, its monotony and uniformity in many particulars, produces more varied and interesting personalities than any savage or barbarous state of society. The life of the savage and barbarian seems to us dreary and uniform, the prowess of one conqueror no different from that of another. Attila and Tamerlane oppress but do not interest us. Madame de Staël, Heine and Stevenson — a woman of letters and two sickly men — are far more fascinating and individual than all the barbarian conquerors and tawdry emperors of history. We recognize that age as vivid and brilliant which produces the greatest number of memorable personalities; in this recognition we confess our belief in the purpose of life.

Growth in complexity and richness of individual character is attained only as *volitional variation*, the conscious desire to be different, becomes an element of human nature. Individuality, the ability to perceive a number of courses of conduct as open to us, and courage and power to follow the one to which we are inwardly prompted, grows with exer-

cise. The more individual we become, the greater variety of action do we see possible and the greater is our ability to translate desire into deed. Freedom of the will, then, is never a complete but a relative power, one capable of indefinite growth as we choose to exercise it. It is more and more important both in the individual and the race as we progress in enlightenment. Could we live infinitely we might ultimately attain complete freedom. As it is, in our brief lives we "realize" ourselves, as we say, only in so far as we advance on this road to freedom.

Volitional variation, so formidable a term, smacking of the obscure nomenclature of philosophy and sociology, need be no longer recondite if we draw an illustration of it from the universal experiences of life. Let us suppose that some new emotion, some personal influence, a new thought, a book, the chance glimpsing of a beggar or a plutocrat, suddenly brings us to a halt in our automatic course through life, and we pause to redefine our aims and conduct. Religious conversion is the most striking of the means whereby a man is reborn, but many another experience will serve; often we may not even be aware of the cause, but be conscious only of a vague discontent with our way of life. We stop in mid-career and, sitting in judgment upon our acts and ideals, we endeavor to reformulate our code of conduct. We look upon ourselves in a detached fashion, somewhat different from our usual partisan prejudice,

which leads us to commend and palliate this or that act of ours with undeserved kindliness. We are, for the moment, able to select our course rather than to obey unthinkingly the pressure of forces upon us. We feel it possible to make of ourselves whatever we will, to be different from what we were before, and different, perhaps, from all other people: this is the consciousness of our power to vary volitionally.

Usually, in such cases as this, we have before us an ideal with which we should like to bring ourselves more nearly in accord. This may be of our fashioning, if we are original, but more often it is an ideal already formulated and well expressed in literature or religion. But whether the ideal be our creation or another's, the deliberate choice of a line of conduct which, we think, will more nearly enable us to attain our ideal than that course we previously pursued is expressive of volitional variation. Open-mindedly we choose to be other than we were, and we plan our conduct accordingly. Of the various roads open to us we choose one, for sufficient reasons, or we blaze a new path through life if none of the established roads seems desirable. The point is this: not that we depart from various lines of conduct previously prescribed in the history of human morality, but that we break with our individual path and strike out anew. The variation is *from* what we previously did *to* a new course of conduct, and this chosen deliberately.

The struggle to establish new habits in accordance with new aims is in its initial stages highly self-conscious and monopolizes the attention of the convert, but as he gains in self-mastery his actions become more and more automatic. Only an occasional act demands consideration and analysis. Attention is then freed from its preoccupation and may take up new problems. Our development as individuals seems to be a series of ethical crises, each followed by a period of struggle with attendant conquest or failure, and hard upon this a period of automatic action or indifference, from which, for one cause or another, the individual is again roused to a consideration of his aims and conduct. Some there doubtless are who live constantly in a state of awareness and are ever the victims of conscience, but this unhealthy condition — unhealthy because free, spontaneous and joyous action is debarred thereby — is not, I believe, the rule. In the spiritual life, as in the mental and physical, periods of growth are normally succeeded by intervals of rest. Volitional variation, which is the deliberate direction of conduct to the attainment of an end, is usually an indication of health; it leads to the development of individuality; by its exercise we show ourselves free beings, not wholly the victims of the forces within and without us.

With how many people, I wonder, is the realization of ultimate freedom a thrilling experience, like conversion or falling in love? It was so with me.

Perhaps I had been too much the depressed victim of circumstances, feeling myself caught in a universe which made freedom a mockery, an unattainable desire. Certainly I was pessimistic, thinking myself insignificant in a universe too vast for me, my puny strength not worth the putting forth. I cannot trace the chain of thought and emotion which gradually freed me from my oppression and gave me a changed point of view. It must have been gradual, but its culmination, the moment of realization, was sudden and memorable. I recall that it was a mysterious cloudy night in summer, with wind and low-flying cloud. Perhaps it was the motion, the seeming freedom of nature, that brought to me an instantaneous realization that I was a free being and could do whatever I wished. I seemed to feel, also, that it mattered greatly what I did. I could never believe that before. The sense of freedom now dignified action; what had seemed petty was no longer so, but important. My emotion was genuinely religious, I think. I seemed for the first time in my life to be in harmony with the universe, to be an important part of it. In the sense of unity I experienced was born a pleasure as sweet as it was novel. I both surrendered myself to something greater than I and at the same moment became aware of a new dignity. Without loss of individuality, but rather with a more pronounced sense of self, I felt at one with the spirit of life. Surely this was an essentially religious experience, resembling what we

name conversion. I have known the same sense of harmony since, differently evoked, but never, I think, so specifically attached to a sense of personal freedom.

I remember, too, that I tried to convey to a friend the wonder of my new realization. We are free, I told him. The most vital need of life is to realize our individual freedom of action and to imbue others with this truth. We do not suffer of necessity. If we wish not to suffer we have only to think and strive to overcome every obstacle. The road to liberty is open to us and we can follow it as far as we have desire and strength. I seemed to see before me a wonderful prospect, that of a race of men, clear-eyed, determining their own destiny, no longer the slaves of circumstance. The reorganized world of which I had long dreamed seemed now attainable. Sin and disease, hunger, pain and ugliness were surmountable difficulties. Men need only be conscious of the power within them to recast society into new and beautiful forms.

My friend to whom I confided this vision seemed not greatly impressed. He regarded me curiously, as one puzzles at any enthusiast. Doubtless my problem meant little to him. Even had it meant much, my conversion might well have seemed only a form of words. After all, what was there remarkable in it? I had formerly been oppressed by a belief in determinism; suddenly I had realized my own freedom, and, by implication, that

of the entire race. But there was nothing new or extraordinary in this. So, too, when a man falls in love, the dispassionate observer notes only an exaggerated fondness for a particular woman, accompanied, perhaps, by unconventional conduct. Of the lover's dreams, his flame of passion, the transformed world that is his, the observer can know nothing. Only art can express the new vision so that it will be felt by others. Only art or religion can express the emotional awakenings which come sometimes to alter a man's attitude toward life, changing him so deeply that he acts thereafter in new and positive fashion.

I cannot pretend that my realization of freedom brought me in a twinkling to a clear purpose in life and taught me happiness in its pursuit. I fell again, at times, into the old doubts and pessimism, for I could not at once devise a new philosophy adequate to my needs. Nevertheless, the necessity and worth of individual effort were borne in upon me ever more strongly, and slowly this conviction assumed a basic place in my thought. Upon it I built other beliefs and theories as my experience of life deepened. It was a fundamental belief to me and seems so still. I believe its essential truth is revealed both in its necessity and its fruits. Without belief in freedom, life negates itself and seeks to deny its own worth. With a belief in freedom, life becomes a realm of infinite possibilities, is always worth while, and if not always joyous is at least real and poignant. Life

becomes more intense, more truly life, as it declares its power and duty to grow as it wills. That life, when lived in this belief, is fuller and richer, is sufficient proof to me that it is the very essence of life so to believe. Freedom of the will is a truth, then, because it is the mainspring of vital action. The alternative to it, determinism, makes life seem only an illusion, an ill-tempered dream; it enervates the will to do.

CHAPTER VI

MORALITY

I HAVE remarked elsewhere that the upright lives led by many unbelievers attracted me to heresy. Good fruit presupposes a sound tree; and I assumed, because the conduct of many who professed orthodox Christianity was far from admirable, whereas heretics were often models of virtue, that religion either had no relation at all to morality or was perhaps even an obstacle in its path. It is true I never believed all orthodox persons to be hypocrites, as the ill-mannered freethinker often asserts; merely, I could not see that professed religion bore much relation, one way or another, to conduct. What that relationship is I cannot easily define, but I have come to believe that it exists. The problem is difficult, partly because morality is so inexact a term, including as it does impulses and inhibitions of diverse origins, the simplification of which is an engaging but inconclusive task.

There are, I believe, books which explain all morality as traceable to purely physical causes. The chain of argument, based upon evolutionary theory, is, I surmise, much as follows: The animal in his adaptation to environment develops certain indi-

vidual and social habits which make for his preservation and that of his kind. Thus the mother cares for her young, and the male defends her and the cubs. Mother love and courage are thus naturally developed and are necessary virtues. That the male may best defend his mate and her offspring it is essential in some species that he be monogamous. Monogamy in the higher animals postulates habits of chastity, particularly in the female. Modesty, shame, self-denial, and kindred qualities are moral by-products in this process of development.

There is, again, the sex theory of morals, which traces virtues, so-called, to the orgiastic basis of life, and shows that all are but curious evidences of the sex instinct. Our modesty is but inverted sensuality. Chastity springs from the demand of the male that the female be his monopoly, a form of voluptuousness only. Sex life is at the root of all emotion; even religion is closely allied to it; our spiritual life is but a manifestation in complex forms of the force in us which leads to the perpetuation and enrichment of life, and which finds its deepest meanings in this perpetuation. Our emotions and virtues thus centre in it also.

To the science of morals that traces the origin of each inhibition and impulse to physical needs, individual or social, I see no objection. It is an interesting theory and I am quite willing to accept it for what it is worth. But the admission does not relieve the individual from the need of determining

his own course amid the labyrinth of desires, conventions and moral teachings which press upon him. He has still the obligation to consider moral problems. Nor is the place of morality any the less dignified because its origin is orgiastic. The beginnings of life and morality are, it may be, found in sexual desire, but life is in no wise debased thereby; rather is sexual life ennobled. The day of prudery is passing, let us hope. We no longer need shudder at certain vital and fundamental truths, but can accept them frankly, marvelling, if we are impressionable to such phenomena, that so wonderful and complex a growth as human society and morals can spring from so simple and so animal an origin. The flower springing from the muck, which has been taken as the symbol of life in its triumph over corruption, is as truly the symbol of all moral and spiritual growth springing from the coarsest physical soil. Anthropologists and physiological moralists must, of necessity, emphasize the particular theses they seek to establish, but they need not imply nor contend that the truths they demonstrate are all or even a chief part of morality in its relation to life. A fine piece of Sheraton is, in a sense, only a bit of mahogany. But it is also much more, and to the collector or householder its material origin is the least interesting of its properties. The chemistry of flowers is doubtless important, but the flower has other values surpassing its physical and chemical constituents. Those who seek always to

show the physical causation for the less tangible things of life seem to be imbued with the erroneous notion that a man is never more than his origin or the sum of his parts. However true this may be, mathematically and physically, it is the grossest of errors in the realm of mind and spirit. A man is much more than the sum of his parts, as witness the quite extraordinary difference between a live man and a dead man.

It is necessary in any discussion of morality to define what we mean by morals and to lay bare the need of which they are the expression. Naturally I shrink from the attempt to put into a sentence a working definition of morality, particularly at the outset of my discussion. It is more profitable, I think, first to seek the origin of morality as best I can. Whence does moral conduct arise? Let us suppose it to spring from physical necessity only, from adaptation to environment. It is then the path of survival marked out by the practical experimentation of life itself. The assumption is, that whatever aids in survival is moral, and whatever tends to destruction immoral. Morality, then, implies the perpetuation, enlargement and enrichment of life, both individual and social. Life, which seemingly endeavors to express itself in as many and as varied forms as it can, discovers by experiment the fittest means to this end. Morality, thought of as a code of conduct for human beings, is then a body of generalizations based upon the study of nature and her ways.

Approach the problem specifically: we observe courage to be highly important in the perpetuation and enrichment of life. Yet we note, also, that self-preservation is essential, and this implies craft, often, if not timidity, for the creature that cannot face its adversary and survive must, if it is to live at all, resort to evasion; thus courage and timidity, opposed traits, may both be moral "virtues." In sexual morality an even greater paradox is apparent. Nature is prodigally prolific. Lest the individual die without progeny a thousand seeds are sown of which but one, perhaps, matures. The sexual need is importunate; every other human impulse seems subordinate to its despotic sway. Yet in opposition to it human beings possess an impulse to restraint; we may even deny the reproductive instinct altogether and practise asceticism. Our desire for free sexual expression is thus combated by the instinct for restraint, a virtue which may or may not derive sanction from the theory of survival. This seems to be a doubtful point. Some moralists hold that races characterized by relatively restrained sexual desires — the northern as opposed to the southern races are conventionally so contrasted — are the most enduring, are best fitted to live long and flourish. But of this the evidences of race survival offer no certain proof. A better justification for restraint I find in another quarter, as will be apparent in a subsequent passage.

Great as are the difficulties of reconciling such

opposed but necessary qualities as bravery and timidity, sexual expression and restraint, even more perplexing is the problem of selfishness and altruism. The instance of the mother endangering or sacrificing her life for her young illustrates sufficiently the clash of self-interest with race interest, in other words of selfishness with altruism, which in a thousand forms puzzles our moral judgment. Self-interest that commands self-preservation seems explicable enough; the very definition of life implies the instinct for its preservation. The animate being expresses the vitality within him through "liveliness," the exuberant manifestation of energy; and self-preservation no less than courage and recklessness is an exercise of this vigor. Wilfully to sacrifice one's life is to deny life — a paradox if the individual point of view alone is considered.

Yet how prodigal is nature herself of individual lives. In the lowest forms myriads of creatures, born for a day only, achieve their purpose, the continuation of their kind, and die. Their sole object would seem to be to eat and gain strength for reproduction. Life barely more than holds its own with death, and only by the scantest of margins finds energy to develop new forms of greater complexity, longevity and strength. As nature contrives those less evanescent and fleeting forms which we call higher, the individual life ceases to end as abruptly as before with the mere act of perpetuation. Sexual expression thus begins to

assume a less important place in the life history of the individual, for some of his energy is devoted to his own development and expression *subsequent* to the reproductive period. He develops powers and characteristics which are valuable to himself alone; that is, they are not directly transmissible, for they are the acquisitions of his maturity and old age. If they have any social value as well as individual value, it can be only as they modify the environment of the young and thus indirectly affect posterity.

In the evolution of human society the margin of life which may be devoted to individual expression over and beyond the perpetuation of the race and the satisfaction of the primal needs increases with the complexity of civilization and the acquisition of security and leisure. When the needs of food and shelter are easily met, when marriage becomes the recognized and easily attainable condition of normal life, and when the rearing of children becomes less difficult and hazardous, more and more these primary purposes of life assume a secondary place in the consciousness of the individual. In an intellectual and highly developed society a man may have won a fortune and be the father of grown sons before he finds his life's best expression in art, scholarship or professional skill. The same condition is more strikingly apparent in the life and position of woman. No longer is she only a mother, destined to suckle fools and chronicle small beer. She is an individual, with a

margin of life for her own uses, to do with as she wills, to express in it her own personality and develop her powers as she sees fit.

The phenomenon of individual development is most apparent, then, in the highest forms of life, and in those fields of human society which are most highly civilized, are farthest removed from the primitive needs and duties. If we assume the animating force of nature to have a purpose, we should be led to think that this individual development, a development which continues subsequent to procreation and which, therefore, is not directly transmissible, is nature's objective; that the richness and variety of individual life is the highest manifestation of the evolutionary process we as yet know. And with this plausible deduction in mind we must consider altruism and the sacrifice of the individual, endeavoring to relate these in intelligible fashion to the theory that self-development is the end or one of the ends of life.

Altruism in its primal forms, the sacrifice of self for the perpetuation of the race, the destruction of one life that another may survive, seems purely instinctive, prompted by nature, which, careless of the individual, is solicitous only for the welfare of the species. Altruism in its most highly developed form is apparently a deliberate act expressive of an individual in whose development through this act nature is concerned. May altruism, then, the sacrifice of the individual for others, become a form of self-expression? And if so does

not nature negate itself, moving in an endless circle, freeing the individual from the need of self-sacrifice for the sake of the species, giving him leisure and opportunity for the development of his personality only to make that development take the form of the surrender of self? If there is any meaning to nature, the two apparent ends of life, individual realization and racial development — for which the individual may be sacrificed — must in some way be harmonized. Can they be so reconciled in specific instances? Does the development of individuality necessitate the growth of altruism? Is altruism one manifestation, perhaps the highest, of individuality?

Altruism is sometimes only a form of selfishness. I give to the beggar on the street to appease my social conscience and to gratify a taste for charity. I derive more pleasure from the act than does he. From a like motive a wealthy man may found a college or endow a hospital. Verily he has his reward. The act is altruistic in its social consequences, but the motive may be only vanity, a desire to see his name conspicuous in the eyes of men. The self-gratification here exceeds the cost of the sacrifice. In true altruism, whatever reward it may bring, we look to a disinterested motive. Sacrifice is involved. And by no legitimate stretch of language can we call an altruistic act selfish which is done at the cost of pain and renunciation. It is not hard to find instances of such altruism. The sacrifice of life to save that of another is a

case in point. It is a hard saying that the doer takes pleasure in his own death, or that the pain of death is less than the mental pain of the unmade sacrifice.

Yet we enter here a maze of subtleties; doubtful distinctions beset us, partly because no one can determine the exact mental state of another and must base his inferences upon his own experiences solely. There are, of course, exceptions, too. In the morbid psychology engendered by war the survivor of a desperate encounter may bemoan the fact that he lives when his comrades lie dead. Death and the fear of death are certainly not the most formidable of man's terrors. More often, altruism sacrifices life not to death but to a monotonous routine of distasteful service. Can such a giving, less or more than death as individually it may seem, be deemed more pleasant than unpleasant? It is made daily by innumerable human beings, many of whom are without even so remote a hope as a heavenly reward, for they have no belief in a future life and find no stay or solace in religion. Surely a surrender so complete and so unjustified by the reason, is a primal force of life itself, seeking its expression in forms more and more refined and self-conscious as man passes from the state of purely instinctive action to that higher state in which action is clearly deliberate. Altruism is, I believe, as deeply rooted as selfishness and may be temperately indulged in or abused; it may thus be either a virtue or a vice.

Selfishness is the assertion of the individual, the effort to realize self as an end of life. In its finer forms it is the expression of the artist, the perfection of the individualist, one who by his acts differentiates himself from his fellows. Altruism, on the contrary, is the assertion that all life is one. The individual, forgetful of self, in his love for others asserts by his sacrifices for them his kinship with all life. And the two, selfishness and altruism, contradictory as they seem, are apparently of equal strength and urgency in the development of the race, which is strong only as it produces many and varied individuals, but these not forgetful of their common origin nor of their obligations to their fellows.

Extreme individualism in such an exemplar as Nietzsche asserts a truth but in such emphatic terms that it becomes false. Yet much apparent selfishness, that of great artists, of makers and thinkers, is in its social aspects altruistic even though the men themselves are conscious of no altruistic impulse. The artist who sacrifices his comfort and worldly success to his work is truly neglectful of self for a greater purpose, one genuinely social. He gives himself to a cause, to the pursuit of an ideal. He suffers in the giving and makes the sacrifice unwillingly. Yet the inner urgency may not be denied. The psychology of the creative artist casts many illuminating sidelights upon the methods and purpose of the creative life force itself, as well it may, for if the uni-

verse is consistent, if the details of it are significant of the whole, then the creative instinct as it drives the artist to his task is significant and typical of the force underlying all life. By studying the creative instinct we can, it may be, learn the meaning of life.

If this is a sound assumption we need not go far to disprove the theory which I discussed, that sacrifice, altruism, brings more pleasure than pain to the giver and is therefore only a form of selfishness. No one genuinely driven by the creative impulse to think and write will find more pleasure than pain in the task. It is true that the impulse cannot be resisted save at the cost of discontent and restlessness, but the creative process is in itself painful and its reward dissatisfaction. Its one pleasurable result is temporary relief from the urgent need to do. The artist and maker is a victim of a force greater than himself. This giving of self which it demands of him is altruism, the bringer of slight gratifications, but more the bringer of pain to one that satisfaction, pleasure, joy and understanding may come to many.

The interplay of individualism and altruism in a healthy nature makes for the growth of each and a consequent strong and racy personality in which the two qualities are almost indistinguishable. Complete altruism or unselfishness becomes indeed in a fine and active nature the most extreme form of self-expression, the two antagonistic qualities so being merged and reconciled. Thus

the individuality of Christ is tremendous. He is so much a person that he looms large after two thousand years, and his personality is more sharply defined to us than that of Julius Cæsar. This is so despite Christ's goodness, which we think of usually as a characterless quality.

Both altruism and self-realization are vital, the interdependent forces which make life real. Neither is enough of itself. Extremes of self-effacement, of passive altruism, if altruism it may be termed, lead, however, to an unreality that is insipid, as the lives of many saints only negatively good bear witness. Extreme selfishness, on the other hand, creates monstrosities so distorted from life's normal product that they become as unreal as the phœnix or excite in us the wondering incredulity that a gargoyle provokes. A balance struck between the two, altruism and self-expression, is a moral state; a code of morality is only a group of affirmations and negations aiding in the creation of this state.

Such a conception of life and morality as this emphasizes the superiority of active positive conduct over that which is merely passive; it invites to participation in the pleasures and duties of life rather than to a withdrawal from them. The moral man is he who expresses himself to the utmost both as an individual different from every one else and as a member of the human family, the brother of saint and sinner. Such a life is the fullest, not the scantest possible. Repression of

desires, self-denial, becomes an immoral thing contrary to the spirit and needs of life itself save in so far as denial in one instance makes possible a more vigorous expression in another. The moral man, then, is one who gratifies the greatest number of individual desires, expresses his essential self most truly, and at the same time hinders no one else in a like expression. The principle is apparent in our law. We are free to do as we like until our liberty encroaches upon the liberty of others. The aim of society is to permit the maximum of true freedom, to develop the greatest amount of individuality possible in all and to destroy it in none. The same ideal is observable in family life. The parent who, in his desire for his own comfort, freedom or diversion, suppresses the normal activities of his children and stunts their growth, denies them the liberty he desires for himself and is therein selfish and immoral. He stands in the way of life. Immorality is just that — obstruction of life.

Asceticism, self-denial, chastity and like qualities are, then, not intrinsically virtuous; they may even be immoral if they hinder the free and full expression of the life force. That this is so a little observation of life will make manifest. The conventional moralist is constantly troubled by the prosperity of the wicked who flourish as the bay-tree. Nowhere is this seemingly more apparent than in the obscure morality of sex. The strong sex instinct, if unduly repressed at the

command of conventional morality, leads often to morbidity, to weakness of body and lack of mental and spiritual vigor, whereas more ardent temperaments grow strong at the expense of conventions. Our moral codes try, indeed, to keep pace with these demands of our deepest natures, and seek to define as moral that which makes for individual power and yet works harm to no one else. But the problem is extremely complex, and no human code can be made to fit every instance. The world admits the inadequacy of its standards in the virtual disregard or toleration of the unconventional acts of genius. In its judgments upon the the conduct of lesser folk it is not so kindly or discriminating, and when it can enjoy the fruits of genius and at the same time ostracize their creator it usually does so.

Puritanism, denying the good in life and averring sin and unhappiness to be the inevitable lot of man, is one of the most immoral beliefs man has ever fashioned — or would be so were it really believed in and practised. But even the original Puritans found some enjoyment in life, if only in the contemplation of their own unworthiness. There was, too, a delicious thrill in flirting with perdition and a solid human satisfaction in the thought of the certain damnation awaiting others. Asceticism and Puritanism also derive sensual pleasure in the mortification of the flesh. This bespeaks a high vitality and a will to live. Life to the Puritan was really intense and vivid; he

rejoiced in it even while he denied its worth. But Puritanism is an unwholesome belief, smacking too much of vice in its veiled pleasures, and it affords too little impulse to frank and joyous living. Its beliefs insult the God it worships. I speak of it as though it were a living faith. In so far as it is representative of one attitude of the human soul, it persists always — a philosophy, a system of thought however narrow and unsatisfactory. The Puritan type of mind exists to-day. Each age must war upon it as it wars upon hedonism, the antithesis of Puritanism, that finds in pleasure the aim and justification of life. Each of us, individually, has the same struggle to wage and must endeavor to strike a balance between the two: to live not for pleasure but to rejoice that pleasure comes from right living.

The active virtues leading to the fullest expression of self and the greatest social happiness are those we should cultivate. Cheerfulness, good humor and courage rank higher than all the abstentions, the negative or passive virtues, important as these sometimes are. A good man will restrain his natural desires for one of two reasons only, either that his fullest, best-rounded realization of self may be attained by the repression of certain desires or because the gratification of a desire will cause unhappiness to another person. Apply this code to sex life. It will not make for asceticism, but neither does it permit libertinism or excess either within marriage or without. Also

it does away with prudery and brings beauty and joy to what is too often regarded as somehow sinful notwithstanding that it is a natural human need. The joy in healthy sex relations becomes joy in life itself. But it cannot be complete unless another shares it equally, for it is as much a giving to that other as it is a gratification of self. Marriage symbolizes the perfect attainment of life, the gratification of individual desire which looks beyond self and finds even greater happiness in the joy which it gives and in the life which it creates.

A natural normal joy in sex life would really emphasize sex less than does asceticism, the evil of which is that the mind does not easily share the abstinence of the body; a desire unsatisfied may take more of our mental attention than one gratified and then forgotten. Moreover, human nature has a wonderful power of translating bodily experiences into spiritual profit. Intuitively it does so. Hence the beauty, to many, of religious symbolism. To the spiritually minded the common acts of life are freighted with significance and in the form of ritual may be made a means of the deepest religious expression. The breaking of bread symbolizes hospitality, the intimate relationship of guest to host, and thus of man's kinship to God. To kneel is to put oneself in a position precluding defense; it is to ask mercy; it symbolizes humility. Symbolism may be made profoundly spiritual. It is indicative of man's power to read

the spiritual within the material — or that at any rate is the common interpretation. More properly, perhaps, it is a revelation of man's power to transmute physical facts into something more significant for his mental and spiritual life, something with enduring value. All spiritual values are possibly man's creation. It is fully as inspiring to think so as to believe spiritual meaning exists as an essence in all things and is extracted increasingly as we grow in power of insight. For if the spiritual meaning lies all around us, enveloped in material forms, it is hard to think of it as other than constant and finite. If it is man's creation, the spiritual life may grow in strength and depth, in wealth of meanings infinitely. That the spiritualization of marriage through the translation of physical union to one deeper and more abiding is one proof of this human power actually to create higher values, to transmute the material world to one of the spirit, is to me certain. And this sublimation I take to be a power of infinite capacity for growth, an augury of man's spiritual mastery of the world, of his progress from animal to God.

How much of our belief in determinism and in the omnipotence of God springs from our desire to wash our hands of moral responsibility it would be hard to say. If God is all-powerful he can put the world right without help whenever he sees fit. If determinism is the one true philosophy we are all victims of circumstance and may properly do

as inclination prompts us without heed to our moral responsibility. Of course, no one really believes that he is impotent and entirely without responsibility. Most of our conduct in the affairs of life premises the exact converse. But when we are weary of effort and ill-doing it is consoling to think we have done all we can and are not really responsible for our misdeeds. The opposite philosophy, which I have endeavored to outline, is a more heroic one. It places the responsibility for conduct upon us. It makes us copartners with God in the effort to make the world better, to realize the ideals which are both ours and his. It is not a philosophy for cowards but for men with heroic possibilities. But that men are more heroic than they know is evidenced by their practical acceptance of this belief despite their formulated religions expressive of the contrary. None the less the avowed recognition of their intuitive beliefs would be powerful to strengthen them for deeds which they now deem beyond their powers. To formulate an intuitive belief and accept it intellectually as well as emotionally is to grow in clearness of purpose and in power to live up to the belief so formulated. In religion as in human love, "Where the heart lies, let the brain lie also."

As I write, one of the bloodiest wars of history is being waged in Europe. Of what value, we ask ourselves, are ideals, dreams, religion itself, when our civilization can deliquesce at the first hot breath of passion and all our higher morality do

nothing to prevent, little even to mitigate, the ferocity of the struggle? Pessimism and cynicism are natural and explicable enough in the face of this primitive eruption, for we are made to realize the gulf that divides our practice from our ideals. Pessimism that springs from the contemplation of this incongruity nevertheless bears witness to one thing at least, our unquestioning faith that ideals are the most important things in the world, however difficult their realization may be. Pessimism is impatience with the reality we see about us and its tardy conformity with our dream of the world as it should be. If we are led thereby one step further and perceive that ideals do not realize themselves but become real only with pain and effort, then, however hopeless we may feel, we understand this much at least, that only as we strive is any realization possible. The weight of the universe is put upon our shoulders. No longer can we thrust it upon God and disclaim all responsibility for it.

Utter pessimism, confessing the futility of all effort and passive in the hands of chance, is despair and death. In only a few unhappy souls can it dominate the active passions for more than occasional periods. Did it so, we should all evade the inevitable pain of life by committing suicide. But whatever our philosophies and our occasional moods of black despair, we feel the worth of effort even in a cause which we think doomed to inevitable failure. Life and the impulse to continue in

it are stronger than all our pretenses, all our philosophies. Herein lies the unconscious hypocrisy of pessimism. Our beliefs and our practices do not jibe; we live and struggle even while we declare that all life is vanity.

Human growth means nothing more than the achievement of personality, the cultivation of differences which mark one man off from all his kind. Inevitably such a process is accompanied by increasing reliance upon individual observations and deductions, and loyalty to individual ideals. Life becomes more real to us as we grow in years and self-knowledge, but this reality is not so much objective — a faith in the material universe — as it is faith in ourselves and in our ability to twist the obdurate world of things into conformity with our ideal conception of it. Growth in the sense of life's reality is really a growth in faith, faith in the spiritual forces of the universe and in ourselves. Perhaps such a definition as this is contrary to our usual notions of reality as of something outside ourselves that does not change. On the contrary, when we become sure of our inner selves and of the spiritual forces in life, the external world assumes again something of the unreality we felt in it when children. This second unreality is not quite as before, however. We no longer doubt the existence of stone or tree, but we impute to them less permanence, less individual persistence than to our own observing selves, once seemingly so transient and unstable. The reality we learn in

life is the reality of the soul and of spiritual laws. If we fail to grow in knowledge of these we do not really grow at all, though growth may readily be unconscious and an essentially spiritual person profess to be a materialist. One who can hold faith in his own ideals, who can keep his soul amid conflicting forces, proclaims unconsciously his faith in spiritual realities.

It is a fact of common observation that "characters" are more often the product of isolated and self-sufficing communities than of great cities open to all the spiritual influences of the age. In the city, the individual is dwarfed and cowed by the forces about him; he is oppressed by the innumerable personalities which beat upon him and overwhelm him. It demands native strength and self-reliance for him to assert his individuality against the hostile forces and dominate them. In a simpler environment a man more easily masters the essential facts of existence and is less often shocked out of his poise and confidence by the intrusion of strange facts and experiences which demand effort to assimilate.

Routine seems to be essential to spiritual peace and growth. The man who travels and sees much becomes too much a part of all he has seen to make it a part of himself. The two phenomena of expanding and contracting personality are complementary. Where the one man masters life in so far as he holds his own soul in defiance of it, another with less certainty of self yields to the

pressure of circumstances. His habits, his morals, his ideas become less his own and more those of his world. The phenomenon is observable often in the decay of character which ensues in those suddenly transported to novel conditions of life. It takes a strong nature to remain civilized amid conditions of savagery. But simple natural surroundings, either of men or nature, those neither barbarous nor sophisticated, will often aid a Wordsworth or a Thoreau to find and develop a strong personality, will teach him the immanence of God and his own identity with the spiritual forces that lie back of life.

I shall not attempt here to give my opinions on vexed moral problems. I seek only to discuss what seems to me fundamental: the attitude toward life essential to a right understanding of moral issues. One or two further aspects of the problem demand discussion and I shall then have said enough to make my beliefs clear, though I shall have done nothing so rash as to devise a code of morals. The chief of my concluding points is that altruism, important as it is to the development of the individual character, and essential as it is to the world, can be abused, that we can be altruistic at the cost of our own rightful expression of self.

The pain and evil of the world din in our ears eternally. Our peace of mind seems to demand that we give all our goods to the poor and go live in a social-settlement house. This is, for many

people, the easiest course to pursue, easiest in its gratification of the moral sense. Yet, dispassionately judged, such altruism may really work more harm than good, both to the one making the sacrifice and to those he seeks to aid. If I devote myself to social service, as it is called, I may make a mess of my endeavors despite the satisfaction I feel in the attempt. Moreover, and this is the point, in so doing I may neglect the development of powers more beneficial both to me and to the world at large. The sum of the world's good is increased when I do that for which I am best fitted by nature. Self-development cannot be wholly selfish. It is often of more social value, as well as far harder to attempt, than a sentimental altruism.

This is no profound or original truth, but I for one was long in learning it. I had, to be sure, never devoted myself to the poor and the oppressed, but the feeling that I should so give myself fought with the conviction that such was not my fitting work, that I was unqualified for it. My heart and whatever ability I possessed lay elsewhere. It took me a long time to believe that what I most wanted to do and felt most hope of doing well was probably also my best service to the world. Young people feel responsible for all the evil and unhappiness in life. It is too great a burden. Happiness is a duty, and cheerfulness is essential to one's best efforts. This necessitates a wholesome disregard of much of the world's pain.

Depression, like remorse, is a fruitless passion. The wise man directs his thought but little to the past and only in part to the present. He is most concerned and interested in what is yet to be. He gives his life and strength to the creation of the future.

Perhaps I have said enough to outline my moral philosophy, for I have no desire to write a book upon ethics nor outline a code of conduct. Definiteness here is not desirable, for ideals of conduct grow definite and real only with experience — wherein each one of us differs from his neighbor. Morality is a by-product of life. It should be our chief concern to understand the purpose of life and then to bring our conduct in harmony with it. That purpose, I have said, seems to me twofold, the development of individuals to the utmost variety and richness of personality, and the passionate affirmation through self-sacrifice of the essential unity of all life. Personal development to the highest degree compatible with a like development in others seems to me the individual ideal. Conduct so conceived is only to a slight degree repressive. Its emphasis is upon life and the active virtues. Courage, cheerfulness and kindness loom larger to it than self-denial, asceticism and all prohibitions, for these are more often denials of life than aids to its full and ardent expression.

CHAPTER VII

A FUTURE LIFE

No one, I believe, can put the problem of immortality forever from his thoughts. Some men, deeming it an unprofitable theme for speculation, profess to do so, but unsuccessfully. They contrive at most to suppress all hope of a future life, thinking it to be delusive and indicative of weakness, and the unnatural mental state resulting from this denial of a normal intuition is productive usually of pessimism. Thought upon a future life is far from profitless. It is essential to the construction of any philosophy, and is therefore vitally related to conduct. That the theme is difficult does not justify us in excluding it from our field of thought. Therefore, when we devise our explanations of the universe we must take this problem into account and endeavor to satisfy our minds upon it, harmonizing as best we can our reason and our intuitions.

Flatly to deny the possibility of a future existence is an inane proceeding. Immortality remains always a possibility; it can never be absolutely disproved; nor perhaps can it be proved to the satisfaction of every one. It is an open question, a permanent crux, and our only course

is to consider the arguments for and against and lend to those which seem the stronger our provisional acceptance. It is really no harder theoretically to believe in a future life than in the one to which we are born. Abstractly it is no more surprising, no more wonderful. The universe which contrives the one might, we can suppose, create the other just as readily. We should never lose sight of this consideration in hours of doubt, for though it is no proof of a future life it suggests an analogy which to our minds cannot be without weight. When at one period of my mental growth a future life seemed to me most uncertain, and even perhaps undesirable, I had always to admit its possibility. I could never find the mental satisfaction which comes with complete disbelief.

Survival is in many ways, indeed, much easier to accept than complete annihilation. Change we readily understand, but not complete destruction, for all our experience with the visible world of sense goes to show that decay and cessation are but seeming realities which may as easily be thought of as creation and birth; from the dissolution of one organism into its constituents another will find the means of continued life or will be brought into existence. And as with matter, so with life itself; it may be conserved as force is conserved, no loss ever occurring but only a cycle of transformations; and as this, my flesh and blood, find ultimate immortality in a tree so may

my spirit be reincarnated in some living creature or persist of itself with or without a material body.

Such a conception does not, of course, touch the immediate problem of individual survival. Cosmic immortality, absorption in the common fund and source of life, means very little to the individual conscious of a distinct personality. He is a separate entity in the midst of a vast universe. Immortality to him means the survival of his central self after the decay and death of his body, the persistence of something conscious of its own continuity and different from everything else in the world. Does this personality detach itself from the body at death and enter a new existence as a conscious individual force? Is there, as Saint Paul averred, a spiritual as well as a physical body?

The almost universal belief in immortality throughout all climes and ages bears witness to its intuitive origin. Introspection likewise reveals in the individual an inability to conceive of cessation. I observe that death is a universal phenomenon, and my reason tells me that I shall be but another witness to its universality. But I cannot realize my reasoned belief. If I think of myself as dead I am but a detached and invisible observer of my former habitation, the physical body. Life cannot believe in its own non-existence despite the assurances of reason. All but the lowest savages have some dim belief in their persistence, have faith in some happy hunting-ground or a place of

torments and evil spirits. And with the rise of peoples in the scale of civilization the conception of the state of survival gains in vividness, more nearly approximating the vividness of mortal life, if not, indeed, surpassing it, for to the ecstatic vision of the religious devotee death is the doorway to a more poignant life. He spurns earthly existence because it is dull and vapid as compared with the celestial life of which he dreams.

The argument that man believes in immortality because he desires it and has not the courage to face cessation is one imperfectly supported by observation and history. Immortality is only half desired, or desired only at times; by some it is even abhorred. To those who have found earthly life an unbroken round of pain and sorrow life itself may seem detestable, and complete annihilation the sweetest hope. Or perhaps not ill-fortune but natural bias determines such a desire. Certainly, many Oriental peoples look upon loss of self and absorption in God as the great and final reward of virtue evidenced in an all but endless cycle of lives, something surpassing any paradise of imagined bliss. This Nirvana may not indeed imply annihilation but only a sense of union with God. What it does imply, however, if not the surrender of self, is rather difficult for the Occidental mind to grasp. Certainly, the belief of the Hindoo that, upon his death, he will immediately be born again in another body to expiate the sins and reap the rewards of good deeds done in this

life is not a belief born of desire. He would prefer to think that the self is lost, but he cannot. The pale and hapless ghosts of the Greek Tartarus and the Elysian Fields are, too, the images not of hope but of despair. The Greek would have preferred not to live again as a spirit, for a ghostly existence seemed to him colorless and devoid of all earthly joys. Though forced to believe in a future life, he strove to keep his mind from dwelling upon so profitless and depressing a theme.

Belief in immortality is not born of desire but of inner necessity. It is an intuitive belief. That it gains in power and attractiveness with the increased intensity of life and a rise in the scale of evolution I believe, but cannot prove, for the evidence is conflicting. Yet the most vivid and attractive conceptions of a future existence and the most whole-hearted faith in it are the product of the finest personalities of modern humanity. To such, a future life means no apathetic state of bliss, no pale realm of shades regretful of life's joys forever lost, but a more vivid existence than earthly life. The flesh in which we spend our days is thought of as in part a clog upon our realization of self, and the future life is conceived to be one in which we become more freely and easily what we desire to be. To this attractive conception not every one, however, can subscribe, not because it is unalluring but because the reason forbids, or seems to forbid, any belief whatsoever in immortality. This difficulty I would explain,

as in previous instances of a like kind, to be the result of our modern reliance upon reason as all-sufficing. When reason is thought of as only the tool of the intuitions we find no difficulty in rationalizing the belief in a future life that is innate in all of us, and in linking it in profitable fashion to our human experiences and needs.

But if a sense of immortality is a universal intuition, and if a belief in the conservation of life is as natural and inevitable as is that of the conservation of force or matter, at what point in the evolutionary scale of life can we suppose individual survival to begin? Are all forms of life, high and low, equally immortal? Does the earthworm persist just as does the saint? If we disbelieve in a special interposition of Providence, by which at some stage in the evolutionary process a soul was breathed into man, it will be difficult to determine when souls begin, and, if souls are essential to individual survival, when immortality consequently begins. It is impossible to say that this or that animal or vegetable form marks the point at which the persistence of life in the mass, its reabsorption in the common fund, is displaced by individual survival. Yet it is possible, I think, to devise a theoretical test for personal immortality, one in accord with a fundamental principle of morality previously discussed: Whenever individuality has been developed to some degree there exists, as the product of that development, a force capable of perpetuating itself. It may be a weak force and

its ghost a feeble and ineffectual spirit. But just in so far as it has attained personality, has marked itself off as different from every other created thing, just to that degree will the self prove a vital spirit when divorced of its animal functions.

Human effort, then, the endeavor to attain a more intense life and a more individual self would, if successful, make for its power of perpetuation; immortality, with endless possibilities of development, would be the product of effective desire; of desire, that is, which stimulates to effort. Life comes to those who desire life. To those who desire it not comes, perhaps, individual annihilation; not the destruction of life but its amalgamation with other defective lives, the ore resmelt and recast into new and more vigorous forms. Peer Gynt, at the last, is confronted by the "button moulder" Death, who desires to scrap his base metal and refashion it to something better, for Peer Gynt has frittered away his soul, is less of a personality than he has been, has failed in life. Yet he has won a woman's love, he has retained sufficient of himself to be still desired by some one; to her his annihilation would mean loss. Therefore Peer Gynt is given another chance.

In so far as we make friends and lovers and are desired we have lived, and also, Ibsen implies, have won the power to go on. Truly there seems no reason to disbelieve that what we desire to be that we become. Life determines its own goals. Sometimes, indeed, it wearies of itself and desires

not to be. But this momentary weakness cannot be so strong as the will to persist, or life would never have triumphed as it has over matter. Only as life is imperfect, non-vital, does it feel such a desire. As it becomes richer and finer, aware of ever greater possibilities, it is better able to achieve its visions even, it seems plausible, to eternity. Thus a profound desire for and a belief in immortality is characteristic of vital and ardent temperaments, save those in which the influence of reason on faith is overstrong. In such case a conflict ensues, with a resultant mixed state of pessimism and hope, of desire and unbelief.

The strongest argument in behalf of a continuance of life after death goes deeper than this, however, and is derivable from what some one has called "the conservation of values." Its primary assumption is that life has meaning, that it tries to do and to become and is not a chance force devoid of significance. What this purpose of life may be, if such there is, I have defined as the creation of as many, as varied and as vital animate forms as possible. If this is life's objective, if life is consistent and reasonable, and moreover if it has the power to realize itself, to accomplish what it wishes to do, then the perpetuation of its successes — its most vital individualities, that is to say — becomes an inevitable consequence. For of what value is it that pain and experience, patience and effort, should bring to flower a rare personality soon to die and cease? Life, it is

true, may create an endless series of individuals, each perishable in itself, but a link in the eternal chain. This is possible, but if this is all, life is essentially futile. Illusion and futility are the inevitable conclusions always, if we think of life as other than purposeful and consistent, as out of harmony with our reason and intuitions. Therefore, while admitting the possibility that life is an idle thing, a chimera and an illusion, it is more profitable to regard it as a force of which our own individual lives are a consistent part. Then we can assume that by a study of ourselves we can learn something of the scheme of all life.

Life so conceived as a purposeful and significant force must derive profit from its toil; its efforts must attain some enduring result. The blossoms of flowers and trees, however beautiful, are chiefly essential in that they produce fruit. Reproduction is in them the acme and the end of life. But in human beings, and perhaps in other animal forms, reproduction is only a minor end. Many of the finest individuals are sterile, either by accident or by choice. This is notably true of men of genius, who are seldom fertile, notwithstanding their possession of strong sex instincts. In many other people, particularly those of highly civilized societies, reproduction is effected long before the parent has reached his highest development; for in the finest specimens of our race development proceeds unbroken and undiminished to the time of death. Even were acquired char-

acteristics transmissible, which is a theory not widely held, I understand, the greatest acquisitions, those coming after the period of reproduction, could have no permanent value except in so far as they helped to modify the environment of the young. A man who in middle life learns at last to curb a fiery temper will not transmit his self-mastery to his son save by force of example, important surely, but as a social gain scarcely commensurate with the cost. Individual qualities which give richness to personality are valuable only as expressed in the living being. Even works of genius, though enduring for generations, are less valuable than their creators. Truly, an immortality of works and influences in any choir invisible is a pale survival of the ardent human spirit, hardly as desirable as the after-life of the Greeks. Desirability may not, of course, insure the fact of human survival, though if the universe is reasonable it is a consideration which must not be ignored. We can say, however, that if life, producing with much pain its rarest souls, derives from them only the fleeting value of their immediate influence and their inadequate works, then life is largely wasteful and inefficient. We as men could obviously improve upon such a scheme of things had we the power. But that we, the product of life, should so far surpass our source, seems improbable. Our greatest wisdom and finest ideals must always be less than life's, if life is a conscious, purposeful and competent force, as

we have chosen to believe. For life includes and surpasses any thinking and aspiring individual whom it creates.

At this point it may be well to pause and consider the question of the purpose and power of life as revealed in the world about us. I have hitherto emphasized the worth of the individual man, considering him possessed of infinite possibilities, a being of value to life and to the Creator of life. But such a philosophy is brought face to face with facts which must be explained satisfactorily if it is to be accepted. Does nature ever show itself careful of the individual? Rather, is it not prodigal of life, sacrificing the individual lavishly for the attainment of some unknown end, or an end which we may surmise to be the development of beings greater than ourselves? What is man that God or nature is mindful of him? There seems at first glance little consolation to be derived from the phenomena of a world wherein the life of man, if looked at from a point of view sufficiently remote, is scarcely more lasting or less hazardous than an insect's.

The escape from the difficulty must lie first in the belief that nature is not purposeless but purposeful, as I take it to be. This end would seem the creation of complex forms of life infinite in variety and number. So much for the goal; but what of the lives sacrificed in its attainment? These can be conserved, be more than a means to an end, only as they persist. If human exis-

tence creates souls capable of survival after death and possessed of infinite capacity for growth, then the means as well as the objective point of nature's processes ceases to be meaningless even from the limited human point of view. Waste is always meaningless, but in this conception of life there is no real or ultimate waste. On the one hand life seeks to enrich human existence, leading it to a complexity of experience as yet unrealized. There is meaning here. On the other, there is no waste in the life process itself, for all the lives which seemingly perish really persist in so far as they attain individuality and value. But only as these two complementary explanations are accepted can we think of human life as really significant.

Life, if frugal and bent upon perpetuating its highest products, those which it can never exactly duplicate, must endeavor to confer a spiritual immortality upon men. Were it able to achieve this, life would be an uninterrupted growth, would be continuously enriched by its gains in character and individuality, and the invisible world would be peopled by increasing numbers of personalities each with infinite possibilities of self-development. Life, which seeks to transmute matter to spirit, whose passion for expression in creative activity is never sated, would, were this so, work to some purpose. The universe would conserve spiritual values exactly as it conserves the life force and matter itself. It is a plausible

belief that life wishes to do and can do this thing; more easy of acceptance than that life achieves only an endless series of self-perpetuating generations. For in the latter case the game becomes an idle one, in so far as we can judge; and such an interpretation of existence revolts us, both reason and intuition rejecting so barren a hypothesis. There must be meaning to life. That we feel, and upon that we act.

A belief in survival after death must, however, show its moral superiority over that in cessation if it is to command belief. The one-time faith in a heaven that rewards good conduct and a hell that punishes has lost its hold on a generation which aims at good as an end in itself, an obligation which somehow is, inexplicable as its origin may be — an obligation binding even though pain be its consequence in this world. The righteous man of courage does not do right in hope of a heavenly reward; he does not avoid evil through a base fear of retribution. That he should, in this, disregard the world to come is, I believe, proof of a higher morality than that which the fire and brimstone of our forefathers served to inculcate. It is a mark of freedom. Man gains in stature as he loses fear of his deity and freely aids God in his work.

Nor has the religious doubt of our age led to a loosening of the moral fibre. The best of the Victorian thinkers and writers in the doubt and pessimism which was born of the scientific revolution and the higher biblical criticism, sounded with

no uncertainty two notes which still are potent in our ears to strengthen and to impel: that of heroic endurance under mental pain, and that of service to mankind — a religion of humanity. George Eliot preaches unselfishness, the sacrifice of the individual that those who come may be benefited. Clough writes:

> "It fortifies my soul to know
> That though I perish truth is so."

The characteristic tone of Victorian literature at its best is certainly dark, but it contributes this much to the ideals of to-day. If we are to dispel the disbelief of the era that is gone we must, in any insistence upon a belief in immortality, make clear that a better and fuller life will grow therefrom. If our belief makes for a laxer morality, for less concern for the happiness of others, we have not, ethically, justified its right to be.

But it is here, I think, that belief in the endlessness of individual persistence justifies itself most certainly. The pessimistic note of the Victorian age, as we might guess, indicates a passive heroism at best — and this with all due regard to the altruistic ideal of self-sacrifice in which thwarted spiritual yearnings found some expression. Life that disbelieves in its own persistence, that has no faith in its individual powers to do and grow forever, inevitably languishes. There is less vigor, less contagious enthusiasm, less incitement to the manifestations of life in the best Victorian

literature than in the best of the newer work which has succeeded or in the great literature of its own day which is less characteristic. The novels of Thomas Hardy lack the vitality of those of Meredith, and the difference is not so much a matter of artistry as of underlying religious belief. Hardy's novels are an expression of determinism. Those of Meredith express unbounded faith in the freedom and excellence of life. Meredith has expressed no definite faith in individual survival. He did not concern himself in his novels and poems with formulated philosophy. But he had an unshaken faith in the goodness of life and in its infinite power to grow and overcome. He was satisfied that life is good and that therefore the future must be good:

> "Oh, green and bounteous earth,
> Into the breast that gives the rose
> Shall I with shuddering fall?"

In Browning a more definite faith in immortality finds full and explicit expression. It is customary to speak of him as unrepresentative of his age. His difference lies in this faith which he holds so firmly but which most of his contemporaries had not the power to accept. And because of his belief his poetry has a tonic quality never found in Tennyson. It is an incentive to vigorous living. Enthusiastic action, even though it lead to many mistakes, is the morality Browning teaches. Better to sin vigorously than to live a life of negative

goodness is his creed. Life and ever more life is his desire.

It is upon its demonstration that a more vigorous and fervent life springs from its acceptance that a belief in immortality must find its pragmatic sanction. I believe that the demonstration is apparent in literature and life, but I recognize that not every one studying the same data will agree with me. Like all the great problems of belief its solution must always be personal, be born of the emotional experience of the individual. I have found that a belief in immortality has helped me to live far more vigorously, to do more and, I think, to do better. I do not believe that a future life miraculously changes our natures to something quite other than what they are here; nor do I believe in any rewards and punishments other than this: I think we are freer to realize ourselves than here, suffer less restrictions from the flesh and the natural forces that here hedge us in. It is a more strenuous life which I postulate. I can believe that to many who have suffered much in this life the prospect of another in which they may be even more sensitive is one from which to shrink. In some moods cessation and eternal rest must seem to every one the pleasanter alternative. But my belief is unshaken thereby. Life, I must repeat, has most confidence in itself when it thinks itself eternal. Belief in immortality is indeed nothing but a belief in eternal youth. To youth everything is possible,

no hardship too great to overcome; it glories in its endurance, its indestructibility. He who believes in immortality takes upon himself the eternal spirit of youth. Age, pain and defeat may triumph over him but his spirit is never quite crushed. Though he may long to die, to free himself from the pain of this life, he looks unquestioningly to a rebirth and more fortunate circumstance.

The case for immortality which I have thus far discussed has been largely based on reason save for the single assumption, in itself reasonable, that life is consistent and rational and thus seeks not to waste itself but to conserve its hard-won conquests. Were life's object other than its own conservation, existence would be futile so far as we can see. But though it may plausibly be argued that the continuance of individual life is the goal of the life force, is it certain that human beings actually possess personalities which survive bodily death? What is the nature of the evidence which can lead us to believe in this survival? Is it sufficient to make an hypothesis which is in itself only plausible, probable or certain?

Evidence may, presumably, be of two kinds: evidence of survival manifested in physical phenomena attributable to no other cause, and spiritual proofs which may not be weighed or measured but which may yet possess some validity, may be to the individual of the utmost validity. Of the first type are dreams, ghostly apparitions and purported spirit communications of mediums.

Most of this evidence is of questionable laboratory value. That is to say, it is not such that any two persons will interpret it in like fashion. The medium, too, may be fraudulent or the message delphic. We refuse to stake so important a belief as that in immortality upon such frail and questionable evidence. Moreover, as the problem is a spiritual one, transcending the realm of physical experience, material evidence in its support rather offends our sense of fitness; we feel it does not harmonize with its theme, which is in another world altogether. In dreams and apparitions, whatever the physical stimulus, the phenomena themselves are truly subjective, they exist in the mind only. There is nothing here which can be produced as evidence to convince others. Should an apparition be visible to two persons even, it would not afford proof convincing to the world at large. There would be only the statements of the two, and though we should be interested in the coincidence we should not be certain that the phenomenon was what they thought it to be. The testimony would have to be subjected to scrutiny and all possible explanations considered, even were we agreed that it was honest and not born of hallucination or hysteria.

Evidences of immortality, like the evidences justifying all religious beliefs, lie chiefly in the experience of the individual. They are to be found also in the experience of the race as manifested in its customs and ceremonials, its religious practices

and in its literature and folk-lore. The belief in survival is, of course, virtually universal in peoples above the most brutish and primitive conditions of life, as mythology and literature attest. Among those peoples most highly civilized scepticism enters somewhat, not invalidating the generalization but sufficient, nevertheless, to qualify it. The cause for disbelief seems to lie in the supposed clash of intuition and reason and the acceptance of the latter as the safer guide to belief. The power of intuition is, however, strong, and an age of scepticism is usually followed by one of faith, so that we cannot safely aver that scepticism and unbelief are the inevitable consequences of civilization and a high degree of mental development. The individual seeking to formulate his own beliefs is aware of these facts, and the virtual universality of a belief in immortality necessarily has weight with him. Nevertheless, genuine conviction, faith that defies argument and serves as a basis for conduct — a practical test for the genuineness of belief — must come from individual experiences born of normal human relationships and vicissitudes.

Little intimate glimpses into the lives of those around us, vouchsafed at rare moments, reveal often a profound faith in survival after death, a faith due to some deep emotional experience in which the personality of one dead has been felt as a living, unmistakable presence. Those who have been blessed with such a revelation from the

unseen world, whose faith in immortality is, because of it, unshakable, will not often talk of it to others. The emotion it inspires is too wonderful to be shared with the world, is too intimate and sacred. Moreover, it cannot be put into words in such wise that the power and wonder of it can be conveyed to any one else who has never experienced the like. In words it may seem only commonplace and trivial, whereas in reality it was one of the vivid moments of life, something never to be forgotten. Yet if one seeks evidence of these shy spiritual experiences, and if he is attuned to their recognition and acceptance, he will be rewarded now and then by half-revelations which, as he grows in knowledge of life, he will interpret as the poignant realities they in truth are. What was once meaningless to him will become illuminating and spiritually significant. Spiritual knowledge and insight, like other human faculties, grow with exercise and conscious effort, though they vary greatly in individuals. There are spiritual geniuses, those with vision, just as there are emotional geniuses whom we call artists. Sometimes, as in a poet, the two faculties are combined; far better than all the philosophies, which treat of men's spiritual and emotional powers as the dried specimens of an herbarium and not as living growths, is great poetry, whose task is to illuminate the emotional and spiritual life.

Power of spiritual perception, insight as we usually term it, varies, then, with the individual.

But in every one it can be developed with exercise, and it can likewise atrophy for want of use. Our progress in life, which should sharpen our spiritual perceptions, seems often only to dull them. Observe the conventionalizing influences of life at work upon the child. A young child understands readily what is meant by the soul and is not at a loss to think of it as disembodied but persisting. Therefore survival after death seems to him perfectly natural. But as he grows older the world of things presses upon him, endeavors to bring him into accord with it and shakes his faith in the invisible forces, those not verifiable by the senses. He seeks rational proofs for those beliefs hitherto intuitively held. Reason seldom provides such adequate to his demand, and he begins to disbelieve in spiritual things. As he grows to middle life, however, and experiences the deeper emotions, as he is brought close to love, birth and death, the man feels a stirring of the old spiritual perceptions. The beliefs of childhood, interpreted anew in the light of emotional experience, seem again of some worth and struggle with his reason for acceptance. It may be that the individual soul begins then to see its task, its obligation to learn, and understands the sin of unawareness into which it fell, seduced by the realities of sense. It begins to see possibilities and duties unrealized before, sees that growth is possible if effort to attain growth is put forth. To men newly awakened to the spiritual possibilities of life the old intuitive belief in immortality

returns naturally and inevitably. But it is a belief which they now understand can never be justified by certain proofs, can never be imposed upon one not ready to accept it. They have come to faith only through pain and effort, and they know that others must come to the same goal by the one road.

Have I admitted that all arguments in behalf of faith in immortality are a waste of breath? Not quite that, I think. To those in a crisis of spiritual growth, the reasoned beliefs of another who has passed through similar experiences may afford comfort and assurance to soul and reason. To those of unlike experience, the proofs and arguments for the life after death will seem pitifully inadequate to justify so tremendous a conviction, will seem, sometimes, meaningless. Belief in the soul and the soul's immortality is much like a belief in love. Love, soul, survival after death — the words mean nothing to those whose spiritual experience has not endowed them with meaning or who do not open-mindedly seek this meaning. But to deny the genuineness of these experiences, to sweep them aside as delusions merely, is to assume the attitude of a scientist who should examine no phenomenon which did not fit his preconceived hypothesis. It is unscientific to ignore any human experience when one seeks to explain the meaning of life. Nor is it profitable to declare all experiences other than one's own the products of self-deception.

A FUTURE LIFE

Life to me means a growth in reality, and I believe the greater realities revealed to us upon physical death will make the experiences of this life seem dream-like by contrast. As children we doubt the reality of matter and of our own personalities. Self-consciousness is the first sign of our differentiation from the life around us. Even with this we believe ourselves to be only half real. We take our opinions and our morals from others and very slowly grow to think and feel for ourselves. We doubt the reality of deep emotion; we feel that great happiness can never be ours. Then we learn the reality of love, and joy warms us to an intenser, more vigorous life. Then death comes close to us in the loss of one we love, and life becomes even more real and poignant than before. Finally death must take us, and, I doubt not, it too marks another stage in our progress toward reality. I believe that with it we enter a life so vivid that the life of earth seems no more real in retrospect than the shadow of a leaf cast by moonlight on the grass.

CHAPTER VIII

CONCEPTIONS OF GOD

When I was a child I thought of God as a patriarch with white flowing beard — somewhat as we portray Father Time. It was the conception stamped upon the minds of the children of my generation, derived largely, I suspect, from pictures in Bible story-books and kindred literature. Such a visualization was natural enough, and was indeed not out of harmony with early Hebrew notions, for in the Old Testament, God is a stern, irascible old man whose emotional reactions are uncertain. Love commingled with fear was very properly the attitude to assume toward him, though the fear was usually greater than the love. To the child there is an inevitable incongruity in an association of the two, and when he begins to think for himself he fashions a God more to his liking, one kinder and less forbidding.

Our human conception of God is an evolution, like man himself, and the changing beliefs of the race in the source of life are paralleled by those of the individual, which change slowly from infancy to maturity and from adversity to joy. Man very truly makes God in his own likeness. Tell me

what is your idea of God and I will tell you what you are, for in it you must incorporate all your knowledge of life, all your power to think, all your idealism. Your conception will reveal the sum and balance of your powers. But why need we attempt any realization of God at all? Is it not better to do without such a conception altogether, when all our best efforts must prove transitory and mutable? That they must be inadequate all experience shows. The God of the Old Testament is not the God of Christ. Nor is the belief in God which a child holds that to which he will cling in his maturity. It follows, does it not, that the God of our descendants a thousand years hence will differ from ours of to-day? Why then bother with any conception, if our best efforts must sometime be supplanted?

To speculate upon an ultimate cause is both a necessity and a practical convenience. It is a necessity if we allow the mind to follow its native bent. It is an intuitive desire to seek an explanation of the universe, a desire so urgent as to be for many persons a necessity; perhaps to every one it is to some degree a necessity. An explanation involves the tracing of causes; complete explanation, the discovery of an ultimate cause. This, to the human intelligence, is impossible, because it cannot conceive of a causeless cause. The law it devises, the deity it fashions, are not ultimate truths but only approximations thereto. What gives rise to God or law we cannot say. That God or law is

the original condition of the universe, so far as human beings can understand it, is as far as we can go. This antepenultimate explanation, which is the best we can formulate, we call God, employing the term most properly when we think of the animating principle of the universe as a personality. Whether personality or power devoid of mind, this source of our universe we must seek and in some fashion realize.

Not necessity alone but convenience, also, prompts us to the effort to conceive an initial cause. Our little philosophic systems are not rounded and complete without such; they are not, therefore, consistent, do not meet the need for which they are designed — guidance in thought and conduct. Once I have thought of God as an upright judge I can, it may be, renounce personal vengeance and endure the vicissitudes of life assured of recompense. Or, again, if I believe the ultimate cause to be a fortuitous arrangement of material forces which gave rise to a subordinate arrangement known as life, I may consider my personal conduct of no importance save as it avoids conflict with physical conditions of life productive of pain. My conception of the universe must embrace some explanation of things which will justify a course of action which to me seems rational. This means that I must devise a God in harmony with the kind of conduct I feel obliged or choose to follow. To justify my course by such a mental explanation will serve to clarify my mind and

enable me to meet the situations of life more confidently and promptly.

Our notions of God must therefore be the best we can fashion, summing all the forces of our being, harmonizing reason and intuition, fulfilling the needs of our natures as completely as may be. Thus, as the stature of God grows in us, so do we witness our own spiritual advance. As he becomes less a whimsical and irate God, less the stern judge and more the compassionate father, so do we see symbolized the growth of human ideals, their broadening charity and greater kindliness, the widening freedom of men in a world of physical things, and a diminished terror amid the inexplicable forces surrounding us. But what is this God who changes with the growth of the race and with that of the individual? Can he — if he is a person — grow and change in accordance with our beliefs? Or is he absolute and forever, alpha and omega, one who slumbers not and also one who changes not? Or if God be simply a first cause of consistent physical relations, how can any mortal conception affect the enduring reality of that cause?

Apparently it is necessary, if we consider the universe as possessing elements of order, to think of God as a personality, a mind that plans, has purpose, and wholly or in part achieves that purpose. The human conception of order is of organization, that is to say, of rationalized and consistent action imposed on chaos, or unpredictable

action. A mob of angry men may fight another mob, but only with the imposition of authority and the establishment of a directing mind does the mob become an army, and order, effective and economical effort that is, emerge from the mere clash of forces. Wherever there is order there is direction, or at least our human minds are incapable of any other explanation, and in so far as the universe we know seems to be an orderly and, in the main, an effective expenditure and interrelation of forces, we must postulate as its director a foreseeing mind which has planned the universe to this end, one which marshals "the armies of unalterable law." Now apparently the universe is, for the most part, just that—an orderly and systematized scheme of forces. From the point of view of astronomy and physics the universe seems, indeed, absolutely systematic. It operates in such a predictable and consistent fashion that scientists devise "laws" which are nothing more than prophecies of its eternal conduct under prescribed conditions. The more strongly this conception is stamped upon the human mind, the more impressive and absolute becomes our faith in the power that determines the orderly conduct of matter. God, this guiding power or personality, becomes more powerful and more reasonable in this modern conception of the universe than, let us say, in that of Job.

The more law is thought to be the inflexible and guiding principle of the universe, and the less any

element of chance is permitted to enter our conception of it, the more absolute must God be. For if everything has its traceable cause and its predictable consequence, if it is within the chains of law, that is to say, if undeviating rigorous law is dominant in every corner of the universe, then the creative mind back of these phenomena or including them within himself is an omnipotent and self-sufficing power. Nothing is beyond his grasp. The movement of every leaf is in response to his will. He is, indeed, aware of each sparrow that falls, and, moreover, he determines that it shall fall.

The conception of an absolute and omniscient God is almost forced upon us by our analysis of the physical universe until we endeavor to reconcile with it some of the manifestations of life. Life is apparently an explosive force amid the orderly phenomena of inanimate nature. There is a clash of life with life, the destruction of one force by another, and a seeming state of anarchy within the circumscribing limits of physical causation. Life, in its desire to express itself in as rich and as varied forms as possible, should, and apparently does, introduce an unpredictable element, that of personality, of individual choice, of free-will. I endeavored in my discussion of free-will to make clear the necessity of this indeterminable element. I concluded that freedom was the ideal of the emancipated being, and was realized in ever greater degree as the individual became conscious of his partial freedom and exercised it. It was a con-

clusion derived partly from self-analysis and partly from an analysis of the part played by volitional variation in insuring the utmost richness of life's expression. Freedom of choice seemed essential to the higher elaboration of life.

Such a conclusion finds support in the Bergson theory that life evolves creatively, that the vital force back of it expresses itself artist-like in the varied animate forms, and achieves its purpose deliberately. Bergson employs the analogy of the pattern left by the hand thrust into a mass of iron filings. The elaborate arrangement of these, regarded as a phenomenon in itself, is wonderfully intricate, but it is more truly representative of a single thrust, however complex the consequences. Life, so acting, creates the elaborate mechanism of an eye, not by the inevitable pressure of forces working unwittingly, but consciously seeking to utilize these forces in the accomplishment of an end. The intelligent power feels its way over and around obstacles. Though not omnipotent it is persistent; also it is increasingly intelligent and efficient and has developed the human intellect as an aid to it in the accomplishment of its designs. Life so interpreted, and the God of life, are not omnipotent, but neither are they completely at the mercy of matter. They exercise the same freedom of effort that the artist feels in himself. Perhaps some of the more recent theories of evolution, notably those of De Vries, offer scientific confirmation of such a theory. The mutations observable

in developing forms would seem to make the advance of life less predictable than earlier evolutionary theories supposed it to be. In the light of these, the life force may be thought of — if personified — as a volitional and intelligent force increasingly conscious of its own purposes and profiting by its failures and successes; it can no longer be thought of as a blind and unintelligent force completely at the mercy of circumstance.

But whether or not this is a contributory proof to the theory that life is a conscious force, neither free nor completely bound, we are obliged, if we are to permit any freedom in human development and a consequent growth in individuality and conscious choice, to divide life off from inanimate nature and to conceive of life's God as less than omnipotent now, however great his potential power. We imply some element of weakness in him, some obscurity or indefiniteness in his aim. This life of ours, so wonderfully complex, driven we know not by what ideals, is recalcitrant. In human beings life thinks for itself, its response to the primal impulses is uncertain, just as I cannot be sure of the response of my mind and body to my bidding. I am the master of them to a considerable degree, but not absolutely. There is an element of uncertainty. I need constantly to put forth effort to overcome resistance.

A God humanly conceived as less than omnipotent is, morally considered, far more attractive than an absolute deity if we take into account the

problems of sin and pain. A God who foreordains the pain we see about us is not one whom we can worship. Pain must be justified by necessity to be excusable; if it is not so justified, the men God has made are greater than he, greater that is in moral worth, in compassion, in kindliness. Religious people meet the problem of pain by evasions. They justify it, if at all, as a means to moral discipline, which indeed it sometimes is, and from it moral beauty is sometimes born. It is sometimes, too, an incentive to effort, and it serves as a foil to bliss. Yet all that may be said of pain cannot, to mortal eyes, justify its presence in the world. For it is debasing as well as ennobling, reducing men to beasts and bringing out in them all their innate selfishness whereby they seek at the expense of others to escape pain for themselves. Human beings react to pain as to other conditions of earthly destiny according to their temperaments. Pain is not justified by its occasional moral successes any more than poverty is justified by the fact that some grow strong upon it. Our genuine belief that pain is an evil is evidenced by all our efforts to eliminate it from life so that we may be left free to expand and grow. Fettered by pain we cannot attain our greatest possibilities, physically, mentally or morally. A healthy body and a sound mind require that pain touch them but seldom. The spirit thrives better in the sunshine of happiness than in the chill grayness it has most often to face in this bleak world of ours.

Men have sought to justify pain rather than lay it at God's door, for deep in their hearts they could find no valid excuse for it, and they wished the God whom they deemed omnipotent to be at least as good as themselves, as loving and as compassionate. But once it is possible to think of God as less than omnipotent, we can take from him the burden of our pain and believe that he wishes to do away with it even as we desire to. We can believe that he rejoices in our conquest of it, for his world becomes with its elimination more nearly the world he is striving to make. We see God, then, as the creative force wrestling with recalcitrant and stubborn matter. The life force in its effort to subdue matter dashes itself against this obstacle and that, is pinched and crushed, but survives and slowly acquires domination, always at the cost of pain. Pain becomes the inevitable accompaniment of life's progress until such time when, sufficiently alert and master of the world, the life force may, by its ingenuity, evade pain. Meaningless pain, useless pain, will then be no more, though the pain of struggle, which is also a joy, must inevitably accompany the progress of life in the differentiation and development of new forms and finer personalities.

In his *The Principles and Practice of Obstetrics*, Doctor Joseph B. De Lee writes: "Is labor in the woman of to-day a normal function? I say it should be, but is not. Imperfect as our statistics are, a little more than one-half of the area of the

United States being registered, and the returns from the registered portion being incomplete, we know that 8,500 women annually die in childbirth. . . . I feel perfectly safe in stating that over 20,000 women die in the United States every year from the direct and indirect effects of labor.

"The immense amount of invalidism resulting from childbirth is absolutely unmeasurable. . . . A host of diseases, some fatal and all inimical to the enjoyment of life — all these conditions and others that could be named in considerable number that follow even natural delivery stamp the function of reproduction in women as abnormal. . . . Not the majority, but the minority of labor cases is normal, and . . . not until the pathologic dignity of obstetrics is fully recognized may we hope for any considerable reduction of the mortality and morbidity of childbirth."

The inadequacy of nature to meet the full demands of so important a natural process as that of birth is the finest illustration possible of the failure of the physical universe to keep pace with human needs. Nature, for all her fertility and her power of invention, her exhaustless energy and recuperative power, is unable to do her work without prodigal waste and pain. Processes once adequate, perhaps, to human needs change too slowly, adapt themselves unsuccessfully to the artificial conditions of human society. Nature's perfections and wisdom of which we sentimentally prate do not exist. Wonderful as her processes are, they are

not perfect and need to be supplemented by human intelligence if they are, progressively, to adapt themselves to the needs of men living in a highly complicated world which changes with relative swiftness. The processes of birth, adequate, perhaps — though even in this not completely adequate — to the needs of quadrupeds living under primitive conditions, are no longer adequate to the needs of human beings who walk erect. The process of human birth has ceased to be physiological and has become pathological. Therefore, man must supplement by the cunning of his brain, by obstetrical skill, the slower and blinder intelligence of that larger nature of which he is a part. But that he is a part of nature is too often forgotten. The hostility of nature to man, which we usually assume, is no more than the hostility of body to brain. Our physical needs seek satisfaction at the hands of the guiding intelligence, and nature, unable perfectly to realize her ends through the unthinking natural processes, has developed the human intelligence to aid her in her need. But this creation, too, it must be remembered, is also nature, nature become self-conscious and intelligently self-determined.

"Yet nature is made better by no mean
But nature makes that mean; so, over that art
Which you say adds to nature, is an art
That nature makes. You see, sweet maid, we marry
A gentler scion to the wilder stock,
And make conceive a bark of baser kind

> By bud of nobler race. This is an art
> Which does mend nature, change it rather, but
> The art itself is nature."

If the God of life is only in part master of the universe and seeks through pain and effort to mould it ever more closely to his ideal, then the universe is really a duality embracing the worker and his materials. Or we may think of God as including these two elements within himself, and believe him to be both artist and the medium for the expression of his designs. So to conceive of God, however, demands that we express our belief in a figure of speech or in an analogy, if we are to be clear and not lose ourselves in Oriental mysticism. The simplest and clearest analogy is to our own dual natures: we endeavor to educate our reluctant bodies and minds; even more we strive to discipline our laggard spirits into conformity with the ideals we hold before us. On his vaster scale God may likewise wrestle with himself, endeavoring through the active spirit of the life force to overcome the sloth of matter, to animate it and make it in turn creative. In this contest with the less vital elements of his nature God, too, may grow ever more keenly alive, may realize himself more completely in the transformation of his own being.

Is not this personification of the life force, who seeks to transmute matter to living forms and to refine flesh to spirit, whose far aim seems to be the realization of self in forms of life ever higher and more complex, is he not virtually the God of pan-

theism? God, so interpreted, seems indeed merely a name for the whole of life or for the larger universe embracing both life and matter, the two being a duality. What personality can we attribute to a God who becomes a name defining an abstract idea? Does not our notion of him as a being become so vague as to be virtually meaningless? If we think of him as personifying the whole of life or the whole of the universe, have we not hypnotized ourselves with words and indulged in a figure of speech devoid of genuine meaning?

To me the most plausible conception of the universe, one in which I sum up all the previous beliefs at which I have arrived, is some such pantheistic hypothesis, but I do not think it vague or mystical. I believe that such a conception can, by analogy to common phenomena, be made definite and clear-cut. I cannot prove the hypothesis, to be sure, for it is only a generalization which, to me, after the most careful consideration of the problem of which I am capable, seems the most plausible and enlightening. Through it I reconcile most effectually the various contradictory phenomena of our world. Moreover, it is an hypothesis in the light of which I endeavor to direct my personal conduct. A pragmatist would say, then, that I believed in it. I do believe in it, subject always to this reservation, that as I grow in knowledge and experience I may find that I need to modify and revise it, perhaps even to cast it aside for a new theory which seems to me better fitted

to my new knowledge. This seems to me the only reasonable and philosophic attitude to assume.

I cannot believe, at the outset, that God, if the originator of life, has directed this force into its present channels and then, sitting aloof, has passively contemplated its ramifications in accord with the laws of its development. If God is omnipotent he becomes the maker of a deterministic universe whose activities can be designed only for his entertainment or for some farther end upon which human speculation is useless. But this conception has seemed, in the light of our previous discussion, inadequate. We deemed it more plausible that God was an incomplete force, not the master of life, though seeking to become so. The forms of life would seem to be the means for his attainment of his purpose, and their success in the realization of the possibilities within them must of necessity mean much to him, their failure weaken and thwart him. God cannot stand outside of life as an interested spectator. He has poured his very nature into life. The forms of life are expressive of him, and the individual personalities of men partake truly of him. Human beings must apprehend God largely through a knowledge of self, for as living beings we are verily a part of God.

What is meant by our being a part of God? Is our relation to him that of children to a father? Or are we literally a part of his body, our aggregate minds and souls composing in part his mind and

soul? The latter conception is the more intimate and really the simpler, if we can consider God a complete and distinct personality and yet as one embracing myriads of lesser personalities who, like him, are possessed of individual natures and are in their degree not bound by the circumstances of life but possessed of free wills. It is possible to conceive of God in these terms if we have recourse to analogy — our only means of approaching the infinite from the finite, the eternal from the evanescent.

Suppose the cells of our bodies to be possessed of individuality. In a sense they are truly individual, for they are born, struggle one with another and with their environment, perpetuate their kind and, finally, as the result of transformations, cease to exist in their original form. I am only to a slight degree conscious of the myriad entities which compose me. Yet when they are healthy I am well and strong; when they are ailing they are the cause of my weakness and pain. Moreover, I, the larger consciousness, can either injure or aid them. If I am careless of my bodily needs I work them harm. If I am solicitous for them, both they and I are aided and benefited. Therefore these entities, so wonderfully co-ordinated and knit together, are essential to my well-being and I am essential to theirs. If I imagine them endowed with consciousness — which, indeed, they may possess — I contrive an analogy which seems to me a perfect statement or hypothesis summing up man's

relation to God and God's to man, a relation in which the dependence of parts upon the whole and of the whole upon the parts is, however, more conscious, for I take it that the higher and more complex the type of life the greater its awareness of self and of its dependence upon the life of which it is a part.

Fechner, the scientist and philosopher, imagined the universe to be composed of individuals embracing aggregates of lesser individuals in an ever-expanding progression which we may represent graphically by a series of concentric circles, the largest and all-inclusive being God. It is the conception of a poet. The earth may, to such a philosophy, be an individual and sentient being, the sum of all earthly life, including mankind. The suns and planets, possessed each in like manner of individuality and mind, would compose larger units or systems, in turn individual and conscious, and the sum of all systems, all individuals, would be God. The basis of this figure of speech is necessarily physical, and because physical necessity seems to preclude personality and freedom, it is a figure not to be interpreted too literally. Like all man's reasoning from the physical to the spiritual, the method to which he must inevitably resort, it only symbolizes an idea. Yet it is intelligible and eminently reasonable to any one possessed of imagination. Certainly it is a theory of God and man in which the relations of one to the other are vital and significant. And if the

test of moral dignity be applied, it is a noble belief. For what are the individual's place and obligations in a universe so conceived?

The tendency of modern thought has been to minimize the importance of the individual man, a result inevitable to our widening conception of the universe. In the days of primitive beliefs, when the sun and moon were only lanterns hung up for the convenience of man, and the stars a pleasing adornment of the heavens, useful in determining direction and the seasons, man was a considerable being, and his existence, though brief, not altogether negligible. But with the widening of our universe and the relegation of our solar system to a corner of it, with time reckoned in æons and distance measurable in light years, man became so small a creature and the term of his existence so brief that he was forced from very modesty to consider himself as of little importance in the scheme of nature. Our religion and our morality have suffered as a consequence. Effort has been made to seem scarcely worth its cost, and God has been so infinitely removed that he seems altogether beyond human ken. A fallacy exists, of course, in permitting the mind to be stunned by mere physical size and duration. The distance of the sun from the earth is far less stupendous a fact than that it can be accurately computed by the human intellect, or that we can, in imagination, annihilate distance and in a twinkling go wheresoever we will. Our bodies are bounded in a nutshell, but our

minds and imaginations are kings of infinite space, and to the disembodied spirit our stellar universe may seem no vaster than a playground to a child. To the soul superior to death and the destruction of the body, the brevity of a single lifetime may be a matter of slight consequence. The vastness of space and time is to the spiritually minded one of the lesser facts of existence.

Yet there remains the necessity of combating the inertia — heritage from our first notions of a widened universe — which weakens our hold upon life and enfeebles effort. For effort is essential to self-realization and yet is dependent upon our faith in its worth, our belief that we, individually, are important in the universe and our conduct of vital interest to God. If we think of him as working in part through us, as failing or succeeding in his plans as we aid or deny him, then we realize that our acts are truly momentous not only to ourselves but to him. Both we must believe to be spurred to our most intense activity; self-realization and altruism, the two impelling forces of life, must be united in a common purpose. For God we will do what we would not do for ourselves, and for ourselves what we can hardly think of much importance to him. When we work both for God and for ourselves we have that conviction and driving impulse essential to truly effective action.

I believe that life becomes vigorous and triumphant only as the individual realizes his responsibility to God. For this, he must believe God's

conquest of matter uncertain. He finds an analogy in his own efforts at self-realization and conquest, which demand untiring zeal. The forces of inertia and weariness in his nature, the desire to give over all struggle and seek annihilation, to gratify self in the evasion of pain at the expense of others—these are the forces of sin which every one feels within him and which a belief in a God dependent upon man aids him to overcome. Morality stands forth in a new light. Sin may be of two kinds, that which springs from coldness, weakness and the fear of living; and that due to an error in judgment, a failure to select wisely amid the choices life offers us. Sin that evades or denies life is to this view more repellent than sin springing from vital forces misdirected. We all feel this to be so. Of a morality which is negative and repressive, "a fugitive and cloistered virtue," we are contemptuous, and the conventional churchman who has done neither good nor ill makes a sorry figure in our eyes, even beside the sinner who errs through judgment only and misdirects forces which, if wisely guided, enhance the power and the beauty of life.

An active morality is characteristic of the religion I have outlined. For our failure to live as deeply and as vigorously as we can we have the sense of personal inadequacy and the deeper pain that springs from a belief that God, too, has suffered from our negligence and weakness, that we have thwarted him in his struggle to dominate

the universe, and that, perhaps, in this vast conflict our defection, slight though it was, turned the scale to defeat. This puts upon the individual a truly tremendous responsibility, one to be tempered by the conviction that the contest is not so close or the issue so uncertain that the failure of one man can prevent God's victory, though retarding it. Life, he may believe, must triumph and grow forever, becoming constantly finer and richer. But this growth each one of us can aid or retard as he elects. The choice is ours and the reward or unhappiness ours, as we may choose either wisely or ill. As we give all our energies to the advancement of life, straining all our powers of mind and will to quickening its pace, so does life flourish. But if we hang back and are indifferent to it, just in so far does its current become sluggish.

Great as is man's responsibility to God, equally great must be God's to man, for the obligation cannot be one-sided. In so intimate a union as this, the duty of God and that of man become only dual aspects of the one necessity. But man's place is less servile, so considered, than in the theories of conventional theology. The importance of his place and God's dependence upon him give not only responsibility but dignity. Very truly, man must co-operate with God to an end mutually advantageous. God we must then assume to be aware of these lesser beings upon whom his welfare rests, and solicitous to aid them in so far as he can, for we have supposed him to be of re-

stricted powers and seeking like man himself to be free of the limitations of matter. His aid must of necessity be spiritual, his attempt be to ennoble the individual purpose and to strengthen it. God's ability to do this would necessarily depend upon the sensitiveness and awareness of the human soul. Dull souls will not feel the promptings of God, perverse souls will ignore them; souls sensitive and responsive will grow in understanding with the effort to understand and comply. Put in simpler terms, let us say that we grow strong in well-doing, spiritual with the exercise of the spirit. This is an old truth borne out by the experience of every one.

The term inspiration, one which we still employ, meant originally that the breath of God mysteriously animated a human spirit, prompting it to activities it could never have conceived unaided. More recently we speak of the "subconscious mind," meaning thereby a source of mental and spiritual activity unaccountable to our conscious minds. It is a convenient term, but no more enlightening than the term inspiration itself. Let me consider them both in the light of the hypothetical relation of God to man which I have just discussed.

It is fatally easy to dismiss all difficult mental phenomena as delusions. The visions of saints and the voices heard by Joan of Arc are thus readily disposed of. But the activities of genius are not so lightly to be disregarded. They are sufficiently

diffused and recurrent not to be ignored; yet they are only in small part explicable in the terms of accepted knowledge. By some thinkers they are, therefore, put frankly in the realm of the inexplicable; by others they are defined, though not explained, as products of the subconscious mind, the source of whose beliefs and intuitions we do not know. But if this subconscious mind is open to the suggestions of God, or, if you choose, to those of other minds, embodied or disembodied, we have some hypothesis accounting for the miracles wrought by genius. For genius is not to be measured by every-day standards; it bears no determinable relation to the strength of the logical faculty, valuable as is a strong and well-rounded mind in making effective the promptings of genius. Genius is, however, impressionable, easily open to suggestion; this is its most obvious attribute as manifested in the influence of other human minds upon it.

The influence of human suggestion upon the subconscious mind of genius does not, however, account for all of its achievements. Some of its inspirations go deeper still, seeming to touch the sources of all inspiration which lie at the root of life. If these sources are truly inspired, if the mind sensitive to suggestion derives impulses from some other mind, as would seem necessarily to be the case, this source must be some mind of larger experience than ours, a mind from another realm, a source greater than any we know — God, or the

spirit emissaries of God. The ancient notion of a familiar genius, a disembodied spirit prompting to good acts, inspiring and guiding, or at any rate offering suggestions for our acceptance, modification or rejection — this explanation is as adequate to the phenomena of genius as any of modern devising. We have only to assume that our subconscious minds are more closely in touch with the infinite mind than we are aware, to perceive the large element of truth which this hypothesis may contain.

Divine suggestion or inspiration, on the one hand, and prayer on the other, would seem to be complementary phenomena, the one God's effort to aid the individual, the other the individual's effort to come close to God. Both alike spring from the need of life to assert its fundamental unity in diverse forms, finding therein its greatest satisfaction and the source of its greatest effectiveness. How broken and interrupted this sense of intimacy is nearly every human being must know. There are times of spiritual isolation when the soul, alone and forlorn, seems friendless and homeless in a hostile universe. There are times, too, when the soul feels its mysterious kinship with greater minds and souls and, because of its sense of harmony and unity, sees good and beauty in the trivial acts of daily life and a lovely spirit in every aspiring man and woman. It is hard to account for this mysterious harmony unless we postulate an enveloping soul and mind such as I have chosen

to call God rather than law, because it seems to me essentially personal and because, too, I have ceased to be sensitive to the use of so old-fashioned a term. But if you choose you can substitute for God, "the first cause," "the life force" or even so meagre a term as "the inner check."

The purposes of prayer are twofold: We seek to make clear to ourselves our deepest desires and aims, and, conscious of our unaided weakness, we seek the sympathy and aid of a greater power which we feel surrounds and enfolds us. In voicing our desires we gain strength to go about their attainment. Our need of prayer lies first in the confusion of purpose which distracts and enfeebles us. When from the conflict of desires we single out one as more importunate than another, we help ourselves by this clarifying process to devote our entire energies to its realization. If, too, we feel our weakness, we seek in contact with God greater spiritual force. This comes to us if we seek it ardently enough. But it is spiritual only. To ask for God's aid in setting aside the conditions under which we live our lives is both impossible to God and undesirable. We must rely upon the inviolability of natural forces if we are to remain at home among them and adapt them to our uses. Our judgment balks at the material miracles ascribed to Christ, the transformation of the loaves and fishes. But it is possible to believe in the spiritual miracles he wrought which won him the devotion and faith of his disciples. Too often we

ask of God miraculous discords in nature. Too seldom do we ask only strength whereby the thing desired may be won by human hands. The products of hand and brain are miracles, too, but they are achieved without violation of the laws and conditions in accordance with which we live. We should desire no aid from God save a clarification of purpose and strength to achieve it. Prayer is an aid to this.

I do not know that the spiritual God ever violates the so-called "laws" of the physical universe. As I have remarked, I am not confident he has the power to do so. His power, like man's, must reside in his ability to turn the habits of the physical universe to the ends of life. This does not imply violation but utilization, craft, not force. But could God violate the custom of material forces and set them aside as he willed, it would be undesirable in one sense that he should do so — undesirable because of the disharmony then wrought in human affairs. For though it is well to realize the inadequacy of reason and the need of recourse to intuition in framing a philosophy of life, we have, too, the right to demand that the universe shall be consistent, that reason, dependent upon causation in the physical universe, shall not be stultified by the failure of phenomena to correspond with the logical processes of thought. We ask that reason, in its restricted sphere, be consistent and absolute.

Miracles, however, are very largely a matter of

definition. Any utilization of physical forces to human needs is in one sense a miracle — the steam-engine, the telegraph, the aeroplane. Perhaps, to a sufficiently informed mind the physical universe would present no real obstacle to any human desire, for every apparent restriction of physical law could be obviated by recourse to another principle equally powerful. God's relation to the physical universe we cannot know absolutely; we feel, only, the necessity of overcoming for him the restraints it imposes upon the ambitions of life. The miracles of the physical world we must look for in the efforts of men conquering their surroundings through the exercise of the intelligence. As men grow in wisdom, the greater becomes their freedom in the physical world. When they die, their emancipated spirits may know greater liberty wherein to wish may be inevitably to achieve. Such certainly is the goal our natures set us. Earthly existence so thought of may be a necessary step to this end; spiritual discipline and attainment, born only of sacrifice and effort, may be essential to the right use of a greater liberty, attainable only as we learn wisdom in the use of the powers we now possess.

The weight of individual responsibility imposed by a universe in which every being must feel himself a factor in God's success or failure, is no longer unendurable when we feel our kinship with other personalities and with God. Responsibility not too oppressive but sufficient to put us on our met-

tle is the need. Such responsibility is ours if we have faith in God's nearness and a hope in his ultimate triumph. It is not certain that he will succeed, for it is only through us that he can, but the force that has lifted life to its present heights, the force we feel in ourselves, is one of which we can hope the best. It is possessed of infinite possibilities which are ours to realize. Believing this, we can work patiently. Life is endless and endlessly varied. We have eternity in which to sound all its depths, and we need not be feverish in our efforts nor discouraged with setbacks; but happiness lies in the exercise of ever greater freedom, and this we must seek to attain.

It is hard, nevertheless, to disbelieve altogether in an active evil force. A personified devil, if not one with tail and hoofs, then an anarchic force hostile to the constructive work of God, is a romantic conception which appeals to the human imagination. We are loath to part with it for the tamer conception that evil means only the conflict of forces both in themselves good but not always reconcilable, as, for example, the clash of self-expression and altruism wherein the one is gratified at the expense of the other. This, indeed, is the more exculpable of the forms which evil may assume and is inevitable to the slow emergence of clear purpose and directed effort from the clash of life with its material environment, and from the clash also of one experimental form of life with another in the effort each makes to attain a wider

and richer expression. The deeper evil is the languor of life, the inevitable weariness it feels as a reaction from effort. This is the evil that seeks the easy path and abhors strife; it is the expression of life's distrust of its own purposes. It seeks not richer life but the annihilation of life. In the duality which pervades all human experience it is the inevitable counterfoil of good. But I cannot think of it as an active principle; it is not disruptive but passive. God must weary of his task sometimes and wonder at his perseverance. To human experience fatigue is inevitable, even in well-doing.

This is my conception of God and evil, of the importance of human effort and of the reliance which we must place in God and he in us. It is a philosophy which has one merit if no other: it provides an incentive to an active life; it dignifies human conduct and yet leaves us a God to whom we can go for aid and comfort. It does not explain the necessity in God's nature which leads him to creative effort and the attempt to dominate matter through the multiform varieties of life. We cannot believe it is only his whim and pleasure to do so, for the process is too difficult, is attended by too much sacrifice and pain. We can only say that we believe it to be a necessity to him as our efforts to aid him are also a necessity to us. The success of God's plans depends largely upon us. We cannot believe that the trials to which we are subjected are no more than an exam-

ination in morals imposed upon us by a superior being for some obscure purpose, our success to be rewarded by paradise, our failure by hell. Such an explanation of the problem would be altogether too naïve, and we could have no respect for a deity to whom we could attribute it.

CHAPTER IX

MIND AND MATTER

At rare moments we seem to feel life peeping at us from some mysterious ambush, or about to emerge from the form of some animate or inanimate object. We catch ourselves that we may see it distinctly, but always too late. Consciousness when turned to the riddle of which it is a part is unable to bring to light that which, in the moment of unawareness, seemed about to reveal itself. This maddening sense of the nearness of life's mystery discourages our efforts at philosophizing. The secret is not to be stalked. It is always before our eyes, but we look through it as through a phantom and see only the common realities beyond. If we search for it, only they are to be seen. Yet we feel it to be there notwithstanding, and we hope always to catch it napping, to surprise it and to be forever after the master of it. Could we have a distinct though but momentary glimpse of it we feel that all the bits of truth which we have gathered with such arduous effort would, like pieces of colored glass in a kaleidoscope, suddenly fall into a wonderful and harmonious pattern which would be significant of all life and make

clear the universe. Could we look at a flower, or cloud, or tree, or star with sufficient intensity, the meaning which it clothes would, we feel, start forth in a revelation profound and universal.

It is this sense of the mysterious core to all the phenomena of the universe which leads us to believe sometimes that the sensible world is all illusion and the common objects of it only deceptions. We think of them as creations of our minds and doubt their objective significance. We feel that could we but disbelieve absolutely in them they would vanish like mists; something would remain, we know not what; which, though much less in amount, would be far more convincing, reality however slight. The sense of illusion obsesses us; it is a constant temptation, like an opiate with which to dull the sharp pain of existence. But in our most vital moments, when we live most enthusiastically and deeply, we are less beset by the temptation to ascribe to illusion all our efforts at philosophy and our desire to think our way out of the muddle in which we find ourselves. And if the illusion theory tempts us again we remember that when we were most alive, most ourselves, it seemed less significant than in our moments of weakness and inertia; therefore we overcome it in so far as we can.

Nevertheless, the belief that matter is not what it seems to our senses persists. We may not regard it as pure illusion, a phantasm, but we cannot rid our minds of the possibility that it may be

only a form of thought, our idea or God's, no less real because an idea, for ideas are real, but with a reality other than that we ascribe to it. We think of matter usually as something quite different from thought, the antithesis of thought, that which we think about. If we regard it as an idea it does not cease to be, but its reality is henceforth different from what it was before, and our conceptions of God and the universe must needs be modified from our previous naïve theories of them. The hypothesis of determinism, which seemed inadequate to a practical philosophy which tests its theories by their results, reappears in a new guise. Determinism, as science has developed it, seeks to establish the unity and universality of matter and to demonstrate that thought is but a manifestation of physical forces and is absolutley determined by them. But if the hypothesis is stated conversely, and we say that matter is but a form of thought, is matter not more bound, more rigidly predetermined than thought? Or is it plastic, directly responsive to thought?

In another chapter I have told my own childish distrust of the reality of matter. I believe that my experience was typical and that children normally pass through a stage of doubt, though they come ultimately to have faith in the senses and in the processes of reason. Undoubtedly this faith is necessary to an effective participation in life and is justified thereby. But this practical proof of the world's reality does not, if our purpose is

speculative, allay the philosophic doubt. And the speculative doubt cannot be altogether ignored, for it, too, is a natural human attribute. It has, moreover, a practical significance inasmuch as the reality of experience is not sufficient in all minds to keep such doubt in abeyance. The Oriental thinker, like the child, is only half convinced that the phenomenal world is real. He is forced to live and move among actual things and to adjust himself to them, but he thinks that reality lies elsewhere and that the impressions of sense are a mirage which God holds before the eyes of men. Therefore, however profitless speculation in this field may seem, in so far as it has consequences of practical value in human conduct, it cannot be altogether ignored but must be discreetly indulged. We should at least test its barrenness to make sure that there is nothing in it which invalidates all our more practical theorizing.

It is interesting to note in this connection that scientific speculation has gone so far as to resolve matter into manifestations of force. Inanimate matter is no longer thought of as cold and static but as an agglomeration of units each possessed of energy. The atom is subdivided into particles yet more minute, supposedly in a state of violent agitation. The seeming stability of matter springs not from the lack of inherent force but from forces in balance which produce the appearance of a state of rest. Destroy the balance and the explosive potentialities of matter are released, and

the force so loosed effects changes within those other units with which it comes into contact. What this force may be with which the atom is charged, or better, which composes the atom, is, of course, a further mystery, but matter so subdivided becomes theoretically as abstract and bodiless a phenomenon as thought itself. Seemingly our refinements of material speculation lead, then, not to a grosser materialism but to mysticism. It is not an impossible leap, at any rate, to consider force in its material manifestations as but a form of thought, for force becomes as intangible a term as thought itself and neither gives promise of any more ultimate explanation.

If God, the personification of the universal mind embodying our lesser minds, is the only reality, and this universe which our senses report to us as so stable is only a manifestation of his thought, we are obliged, however, to consider the material world as thought different in kind from the intangible thought which we usually mean when we employ the term. If matter exists only as God's idea, and to our minds, partaking of the nature of God's, is an idea also, it is a form of idea which is less evanescent, less flexible, than the conceptions which we base upon it, and in this difference in flexibility lies a distinction even more difficult than that which confronts us when we attempt to distinguish between mind and matter. We gain little in our effort to unravel the mystery if we simply exchange one term for another. To the

human mind there is a difference between the observer and the thing observed. Call them both ideas or call them both matter and the difference still persists.

Yet as soon as we make a generalization, the qualifications immediately suggest themselves. Matter — or that form of thought which we call matter — is, we have said, more obdurate, less amenable to change, than the ideas which we derive from it. It changes, but in accountable ways and slowly, whereas human thought is far less restricted and is far less predictable; it is freer and more elastic. Yet human thought can bring about changes in the forms and disposition of matter. It can make steam and electricity by working upon water with heat. But its process is slow and the means are fixed. It does not simply conceive the idea, electricity, and, presto! achieve it by an act of will. If, however, I express an idea in words I convey it with only this slight indirection to the mind of another; I create the idea. Nor do I need even to formulate it always in words. Sometimes I can convey it to another by a glance or in less tangible ways which preclude analysis. Here I make my idea manifest with greater ease and rapidity than when I express it in material changes. These I am obliged to effect indirectly and slowly. When I influence another mind I work, often, directly and rapidly.

There are instances, however, in which the mind seems to work directly on matter itself. This is

notably true in the phenomena of the body. If I am brave and cheerful when in the grip of disease I hasten my recovery. If depressed, I retard it. The condition of my mind has great influence upon my bodily state. I may retard fatigue by an effort of the will or by exciting my mind to a fresh interest. In an exalted mood I may even become oblivious to pain, and, if a martyr at the stake, bathe my hands in the consuming fire and die in an ecstasy of joy. The phenomena of mental healing bear witness to this power of mind over matter, a direct exercise which seems actually to effect physical change without recourse to those indirect means which are employed in science. There are records of marvellous cures accomplished thereby, and these we cannot ignore if we are not bound by limited hypotheses of life to reject them without examination. Are they a proof that mind can manipulate matter simply by taking thought, and if so, how great is this power? Is it complete, if not actually then potentially, or is it limited, and, if so, how?

Two or three peculiarities of the influence of mind over matter are apparent. I cannot by willing it remove a pebble from my path nor pass through a stone wall. Suppose, however, the wall to be of men. A brave and determined man has sometimes broken a ring of enemies, who have made way for him, cowed by a superior will and energy. Here mind acts upon mind directly to effect a change in the disposition of matter, if we

define the encompassing bodies of men as matter. The effect of an individual will upon others is, of course, a phenomenon which we note daily. Leaders of the boys' gang, of an athletic team, or of any democratic body are rarely the most intelligent of the group which selects them. They possess that intangible quality we call leadership, which seems to be a matter of will or vital energy rather than an intellectual power, and not always, or even usually, save in the most primitive groups, is this quality associated with physical superiority. The power of the will is an intangible thing, but we are nevertheless conscious of it, and we say of a man that he has a strong or weak personality without considering the mysterious implications of our comment. It is a recognition of the unequal psychic powers of men, and it need not be forced by any overt act. This power emanates from us and, as we feel it in others, forms in part the basis for our instinctive likes and dislikes.

Minds can, then, have some direct influence upon other minds. The mental superiority of men is felt by animals, and a dog will leave his canine friends at his master's bidding or to follow a stranger. The animal tamer, who conquers beasts not wholly by the exercise of physical force, dare not turn his back upon them. Moreover, his influence over them varies. When he is confident and has faith in his superiority he dominates them. When his faith wavers they recognize the fact and take advantage of it. But the domi-

nance of mind becomes greater with the rise in the scale of being. Apparently it is dependent in part upon the powers of attention both in the dominant and the receptive mind, and this is a sophisticated faculty seldom found in inferior minds. It is easier to hold the attention of a group of intelligent boys than of dull boys. The intelligent man is more open to suggestion because more readily attentive than is the stupid man. All this is to say that mind more easily influences what resembles it than what differs from it. If we regard mind and matter as essentially the same, whatever terminology we adopt, we have this striking difference to account for: matter is directly responsive to the influence of mind to a far less degree than is mind itself.

In the phenomena of mental healing, therefore, we should postulate in the light of the previous discussion, that the influence of one mind on the bodily condition of another is determined largely by some basis of accord between the passive and the active minds. This correspondence would consist in the ability to attend, to keep the mind upon a single theme. Were the power of attention great in both, the ideal condition for the mental control of the bodily state of another would be established. But this power of attention is largely a willingness to give oneself to an influence. It demands faith in the power and worth of that influence. Where this is not granted on either hand — that is to say, when either the active or

the receptive mind does not give itself freely — any considerable results would seem to be improbable. I am not sufficiently acquainted with the phenomena of mental healing to demonstrate how fully this speculation is supported by fact, but the miracles of healing attributed to Christ have this accord of healer and patient as their central condition, as can be seen by referring to the gospels of the New Testament.

Whether or no we can believe that Christ healed the blind and those suffering from palsy and leprosy, it is notable that the cures alleged are for the most part based on faith. This faith is twofold, Christ's faith in his own powers and the faith of the one diseased in Christ's ability to heal. Christ himself says to the centurion who asks aid for a sick servant that a faith which can believe in the power to heal at a distance, without the laying on of hands, is great indeed. The sick servant is cured; but in this instance we do not know that the sick man himself believed in Christ's power. It is the centurion's faith that brings the ready response. In other instances, however, the diseased come to Christ, and it is evident that much is dependent upon the faith they profess. I do not know what can be made of these miracles by the modern mind seeking to rationalize them, for not all are of a kind. In some instances the sick are in a trance or supposed to be dead, in which case there could be no mental response in the mind of the patient. Yet it is obvious that the chroni-

cler of these incidents sees much virtue in a believing attitude, in faith. Those who profess faith in Christ's powers are healed, as are those for whom they supplicate his aid.

The modern mind is certainly sceptical of the healing powers attributed to Christ. Yet it feels a difference between the power of healing, which has analogies to mental phenomena with which we are familiar, and more impersonal miracles in the realm of inanimate nature. It is more difficult for the mind trained in modern thought to credit Christ's stilling the waves or feeding the multitude with loaves and fishes, than to believe in his powers of healing, inexplicable as these are. We are not sure what phenomena may lie in the unexplored realm of mind. There are possibilities here which prevent us from passing too hasty and dogmatic judgments. But we find it hard to believe that the processes of inanimate nature are ever violated by a direct act of the will. However much the mind's beliefs in its own power may create that power or liberate it, we cannot believe it great enough to dominate inert matter.

We turn again and again to this difficulty whenever we speculate upon the problem of mind and matter. Some direct influence of mind upon bodily conditions we must, of course, admit, just as we must admit that physical conditions in turn influence mind. A contented mind, one at ease and untroubled by worries, will do much to stimulate a good digestion. A good digestion, in turn,

will do much to produce a healthy mind. Yet we are unable to believe that body and mind are one and the same. We cannot believe them alike, whether they both be called ideas only, or matter. There is a difference between them. Mind seems to be an active and determining force seeking to control matter absolutely. But apparently it is not absolute master of even the matter which it most nearly permeates, its own bodily habitation. What the degree of its power is and how that power effects its ends, when it can effect them, is insoluble. But we may believe that the mind's faith in itself goes far to accomplish its purposes. The man who believes in himself does much. The man who refuses to let his bodily condition overwhelm him can often conquer his body — though not always.

These speculations, though seemingly profitless at first glance, are not really so. They may not lead to dogmatic conclusions, but they suggest other interesting speculations upon the central theme: the nature and the relations of matter and mind. Postulate, for instance, the identity of mind and matter in that, though somehow different in degree, both are but ideas in the mind of God. They are ideas of differing flexibility. Mind is fluid, easily amenable to suggestion; matter is more obdurate. To some degree it seems amenable to the direct action of mind when it is, as we say, alive; that is, when it is in the form of a body, when its relation to mind is very intimate. If

inanimate it can be modified only by indirect action. One part of it is played off against another to accomplish the purposes of mind: Thus our procedure in the conquest of nature and our manipulation of it in accordance with our needs and desires. Of matter itself, whether utterly different from mind or no, there are further questions to be put: Is matter constant in amount, and how has it come to be? Can it increase in amount and in complexity of form? Is it transmuted by life into living forms, and is the aim of life to refine the whole of it?

The earth, the most obvious material thing we know, seems both the grave and the source of life. The soil which grows our crops is largely disintegrated vegetable and animal matter. If we dig into the earth's crust we come upon the fossil remains of plant and animal forms long since perished. Deep in the limestone beds are the lithographs of fern and shellfish. The rind of the earth is made up of the disintegrated forms of life, which in their turn afford nourishment for living plants and animals. Is the quantity of matter, then, constant, or does it grow? Does this earth of ours actually bulk larger with succeeding ages and the accretions from once living forms, or is it always the same? Can the forms of life which the earth produces in such infinite numbers add anything to matter, or does matter simply lend itself to new forms but remain always the same in amount?

The conservation of matter is a theory upon

which our science rests. It postulates that the changes of matter, though endless, do not actually diminish its amount. A solid may be transformed to a gas and pass from sight, but the theory assumes that there is no actual loss incurred, only a change from a form that is more tangible to one that is less so. The converse of this seems also implied. If there is no loss there can also be no gain. But this inference cannot be accepted without examination. Bizarre as the thought may be, it is legitimate to speculate upon the possibility of matter actually increasing in amount as it is metamorphosed and becomes now the garb of life and then its cerements. It is not an adequate disproof to say simply that such a growth is impossible. This extraordinary world itself, and life in its varied forms, would be an impossibility were they not facts for which we have to devise the best explanations we can. Let us consider, first, some of the analogies to the possible growth of matter which life and its attributes suggest, and then speculate further upon the possible origin of matter.

Not the least of the phenomena of life is its power to increase, to add actually to the sum of all life. In its simpler processes this addition to life is apparently at the expense always of something else, so that we think of the sum of the world's matter as constant, though the division into animate and inanimate forms may be in an inconstant ratio. If the grass clothes a barren spot of earth it does so at the expense of the minerals in the

soil, of water and of the energy poured upon it by the sun. Animals feed upon the grass and other animals upon them. There is always the possibility, however, of increasing the sum of life up to physical limits which are more or less uncertain, but which do exist, whether or not they are ever attained. The human population of the earth might, theoretically, increase to a point at which further additions would be a physical impossibility; the necessary food and standing-room would be lacking.

When, however, we turn to the phenomena of mental life, the limitations to growth are not so obvious. With the acquisition of knowledge we see always new and more distant frontiers. The universe widens to us as we progress in knowledge of it instead of seeming less, as it would were the mental universe only a physical thing with a fixed limit, however remote. We may suppose some limit to the stellar universe, one almost impossible to conceive, to be sure, but still a limit, a point at which the suns become fewer and more widely scattered, finally ceasing altogether and verging on nothingness. Knowledge is not so circumscribed. There are possibilities in the infinitely little as well as in the infinitely great. We pursue the molecule to the atom and this to the ion, and beyond lies something yet more intangible and mysterious. Nor, again, does knowledge comprise only this pursuit of the essence of matter, for it is more humanly concerned with the endless complexities

and combinations of human life reacting upon the phenomena of the physical world and upon itself. The factors in this equation are incalculable. Literally we could live forever in such a world as ours and still find more to know.

As the mental possibilities of life seem inexhaustible, so, too, are the possibilities of the spiritual life. These are still vaster than the domain of the mind, for, whereas the mind is conscious of certain inherent limitations which restrict its pursuit of knowledge in some directions, spiritual growth, by its very existence, opens up endless vistas of further development. As we grow in spiritual experience we see further possibilities of growth. The spiritual universe becomes vaster as we explore it, for we help to create it. Our explorations are not only discoveries of what already exists, but are additions to the field of exploration. Growth seems to be the essence of life — the power to create endlessly, to create a spiritual world by the very fact of living in it. No boundaries can be assigned to such a universe, for it expands outward like a sphere charged with some gas capable of infinite diffusion. To change the figure, the spiritual universe rolls up like a huge snowball and increases by virtue of its own momentum.

If we contrast with the physical universe, thought of as constant in bulk however protean in form, the worlds of mind and spirit which grow with our progress in them, which grow, indeed,

because we make them do so and literally bring them into being, we are struck by the failure of matter to keep pace with mind and soul. What, then, if this world of matter is not constant, as we think it, but grows as mind and spirit grow? Is it possible that this is the case? As an hypothesis it has this to recommend it, that the world of matter is brought thereby into closer harmony with the world of spirit than before was the case. We have simplified our conception of the universe somewhat by making all of it amenable to the same fundamental principle, that of growth with use. Furthermore, we can more readily conceive a harmony existent where discord was before apparent. The hypothesis that the world of matter is only an idea projected by the mind of God is more intelligible than before. To be sure, matter and mind are not yet identified; we still think of them as distinct. But if we can suppose matter to keep pace with mind, to grow with it, we have made their relations far more intimate than before and are on the road to a unifying hypothesis.

Physical evidence of such an hypothesis would, of necessity, be difficult to establish. It is often impossible to determine the distance of a fixed star, for the reason that its parallax is so minute that it cannot be measured. So, too, the physical growth of the universe might well be so slow a process that the brevity of mortal observation would be inadequate to its measurement. It is interesting, however, to one not a scientist, to note that the

records of early life forms and of ancient civilization lie buried deep, as though the rind of the earth had grown over them, as the bark of a tree over a gash in its trunk. Ancient Troy was found with the ruins of several cities, one upon another, above it. Fossils are imprisoned in stone, and the bones of ancient animals are covered by beds of clay and shale. We usually assume that they have been buried by glacial deposits or by sand and dust. Still, they are buried, and not as though the earth had denuded itself in one place to cover them in another, but had actually added another ring to its circumference, like an "aged, vast and still growing tree." Dust from interstellar space or the increment of meteorites has been considered by some scientists the source of this increase — if it actually is an increase — and presumably the theory that the sum of matter in the universe is constant is not shaken thereby. What adds to the earth may be taken from other stellar bodies. The position of matter has been altered, but no additions to it have necessarily been made.

Yet were this earth a growing organism, perhaps possessed of consciousness, and were the physical universe a growing thing — in whatever mysterious fashion such growth might come to pass — our conception of the unity of life and matter would be much clarified. Obscure both would remain in origin and method of growth, but we should have achieved an initial simplification. And now,

as we have plunged so far into the sea of unverifiable speculation, let us pursue the chain of hypothesis farther still. Consider the exercise no other than the spinning of a fairy-tale, it yet has a certain fascination, and perhaps has the positive and practical value derivable from any startling theory, of making the world for a time assume an air of novelty.

It is possible, we have surmised, that the physical world grows as the minds and souls of men grow, with exercise. Yet in what way could such a growth come to pass? Is it dependent in any way upon life as we know it, or does it pursue a growth of its own, independent of all living forms? The latter is quite possible, but it is equally possible that the universe is a vast mausoleum, its physical structure made of the cast bodies of once animate creatures. These, growing we know not how, come at last to the point at which further development within the circumscribing physical conditions is no longer possible. Then they die, as we say, perhaps to assume other bodies in an endless process. That which they leave behind them is added to the material world, which thus keeps pace with the living world of which it is both progenitor and legatee. Such a process is inexplicable to the human mind, but that does not vitiate its possibility. Consider the analogy, for perforce we deal only in analogies in such a speculation as this, with the world of inherited ideas into which we are born.

The child is the inheritor of the thoughts of his ancestors, just as he is the inheritor of their physical strength and weakness and their material wealth. These thoughts encompass him in the form of social institutions, religion, habits, morals and scientific knowledge. His growth is a process of assimilation. He takes in such of these ideas as he can digest, builds his mind and ideals from them, and when at last he has assimilated sufficient to give him strength for creative effort of his own he alters them to new combinations and adds to them. The sum of the ideas of the world represents its degree of civilization and progress. But just as this body of ideas at any time represents an advance upon preceding times which it includes, so is the body of ideas of to-day the nucleus of a greater accumulation to be. The process of life is accompanied by this increase in the body of ideas. The growth is uneven, of course; there are occasional setbacks, and some of what has accumulated seems, for a time, to be lost. But, in general, growth is apparent, and the sum of the world's ideas to-day is greater, so far as we can tell, than in any preceding age.

This fund of ideas both imposes a restriction upon and offers inspiration to the mind of man. It feeds him, brings him up to the level of his ancestors and, in the effort which is thus demanded, taxes his strength so that his independent advance, his own addition to the common fund, is made more difficult. If he is to master all that

has already been thought in the world he will give his life to the task and leave neither time nor energy for a contribution of his own. The problem of education is to select from the great mass of knowledge what is enduring and significant, and to give to the learner only that, endeavoring the while to keep the creative energy alive, to foster and strengthen it so that every one who lives may add something to the world and make it the richer for his being in it. Education has a hard time with so difficult a task. Often it overwhelms youth with the weight of the accumulated knowledge of the world, and leaves no energy for the yet more important obligation which every human being feels but cannot often obey of adding to the sum of human ideas. The dead who give their bodies to the earth that new life may spring from it, and bequeath their ideas to us that we may improve upon them, set us a task which is increasingly difficult with the process of the suns.

In the light of this analogy, in a comparison, that is, with the nature and influence of inherited ideas and institutions, it is not hard to regard the physical universe as a by-product of life, a slow growth made of the accumulated outworn physical garments of an infinite number of life forms. It, too, is both an aid and a hindrance to succeeding life, whose movements it restricts even while affording nourishment and the means of growth. Life cannot move or act save as the dead past permits. If men wish to defy matter they cannot

do so openly; a mere act of the will cannot alter the nature of the physical universe. They must resort to craft, must play one part of the universe against another, make one of its fixed habits nullify a second. Our science is only the formulated results of our experiments and efforts in thus endeavoring to outwit the physical world, and do freely in it what we will.

If it seems strained and fanciful to consider the physical universe as the accumulated mass of life forms from which the life has passed, and yet more strained to consider the world of matter as an accumulation of dead ideas — ideas, that is, which have done their part and been surpassed, whereas living forms are active ideas — contemplate the alternative. We see around us a vast universe. so immense that we can only guess its possible dimensions. This universe moves in definite ways, many of which we already understand. But how so great a mass came to be, how matter great or small can ever be, we have no idea whatsoever. It is simply there. We assume this matter was the same in amount at the beginning as now, though different in form, for it is constantly modified and refashioned in response to forces within itself. How its habits were determined we cannot guess. We can only suppose the stellar universe consists of an invariable amount of matter, which might as easily have been made more or less than it is, but which happens to be as we see it. Such a statement of the obvious, which is our conven-

tional evasion of the difficulty, sheds no great amount of light on ultimate origins nor on the relation of mind to matter. We need feel no hesitation, therefore, in pursuing the other line of speculation outlined. It cannot be less illuminating than the present state of the case as defined by science.

A further possibility in accord with the previous hypothesis is suggested if we turn again to the principle upon which we have laid so much stress throughout this discussion, the principle, namely, that life seeks to master matter. If matter is an outworn form of life it may yet restrict life in its free expression, for the thoughts of our ancestors, as we observed, are also restrictions upon our thoughts, and are both a source of aid and a hindrance to us. Life may seek to master its past, matter, in more direct ways than it has as yet devised. Perhaps it shows a beginning of this power in the individual's ability to master in part the processes of his own body by an effort of the will. If this is a beginning, the path of evolution would seem to lie along an increasing mastery of the body through an effort of the will, with ultimate complete control. From this it would proceed to a mastery of external matter in like wise until matter would present no difficulties which life could not directly overcome. And in this process the mind's faith in its own power so to act would be a chief means to its success, for, as has been said repeatedly in these chapters, the remarkable quality

of life is its power to set itself any ideal it chooses and then proceed to the realization of that ideal. An aid to this realization of the mind's power might readily lie in the assumption we have made, that mind and matter have much in common, are essentially the same despite seeming differences. If both are but forms of ideas, and ideas may do as they will, the liberation of mind from the bonds which now confine it seems an inevitable conclusion.

It is an exhilarating and inspiring thought that this physical universe is a slow and experimental growth, and that the laws which we learn to understand have been evolved by a creative mind which still works with them. The vastness, complexity and order of the heavens move us to admiration. It is hard to see wherein man can add anything to a system so vast and so subtly adjusted. Yet if we think of God as a workman experimenting amid his creations, we may think of him, also, as bound to his previous efforts, to the heritage of his own ideas, as man is bound to the past, to human institutions and inherited knowledge and ideals. These dead ideas, whether inanimate, as in rocks and crystals, or animate, as in the forms of life, would represent in their increasing variety and complexity the progress of life's experiments, a slow progress made up of infinitely little steps achieved through incalculable time. The more highly evolved the physical universe becomes, the more difficult it would be for God to break his traditions and refashion the scheme of things, for the greater

would be the accumulation of outworn ideas, dead ideas, but hampering nevertheless, and not to be wished away. He might well be in danger of being bound and entrapped by the creations of his own thought, just as a man is in part a slave to his inherited ideas and those which he has outstripped. By them he has grown, but they are a part of him, never to be wholly forgotten.

It is at this point that we can see cause for the creation of life. God, in casting about for a way to liberate himself from a too oppressive past and the weight of a too mechanical universe, presumably experimented with forms of life in the endeavor to develop one with elements of volition, a creature of partial freedom and containing within it the germ of greater freedom. Such a creation might go far to make the scheme of things less mechanical than it now seems, for it would be the purpose of such a life form to become increasingly free of the restrictions imposed by the past, of the oppression of matter, that is to say, and its own inherited ideas. It would be the ideal of such a creation to work freely and directly with matter and effect its purposes with the utmost ease and simplicity — ultimately through mere conception and desire. Our present state of development may be considered a half-way stage in this process. We have won a partial freedom and we see in ourselves a potentially greater freedom. Our place in the universe then becomes important by reason of our difference from the hidebound forces we see in the external world.

We can be greater than they because we are capable of a greater freedom and a less rigorously determined growth.

Philosophy is only an attempt at simplification. It tries to reduce the complex phenomena of life to a few fundamental principles. In this chapter, in the pursuance of the attempt to simplify, I have postulated that matter and mind are only ideas in the mind of a personality we call God. I have tried to show that matter may really consist of outworn mind, may be the dead stuff that mind casts off in its endless transformations. Matter, then, may grow as mind grows, and be both an aid and a hindrance to it in the effort to realize a more complex development. I have suggested further that mind, chafing at this restriction imposed by its past, may seek to overcome it and develop a freer mode of realization by expressing itself directly rather than indirectly through matter. These are, of course, unverifiable speculations, but if they are admitted to be legitimate we have greatly simplified the problems with which philosophy must deal. God and the first tentative idea which he formulated remain. What God is and how or why he should have conceived his initial idea, if of necessity or choice, we cannot guess. Only it seems that God is not free, any more than we are free, to work as he wills with the products he has made. He advances slowly as men advance slowly. He expresses himself in part through us and aids us as we aid him.

CHAPTER X

RELIGION AND RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS

Thus far in my efforts to construct an individual philosophy I have shown my early dislike for conventional religion, my agnosticism, my faith in a religion of humanity — socialism — the inadequacy of this to my spiritual needs and the consequent necessity of defining my faith in God, morality and human endeavor. It would seem I had come to the point at which I could "embrace a religion." But though the effort to devise a philosophy is essentially religious in its prompting, and though I have experienced many of the emotions called religious, and, even more, though several religions and many religious people attract me greatly — notwithstanding all these valid reasons I am not and cannot be an orthodox person and join a church. Inasmuch as a religious state of mind seems to most people to necessitate a formal adherence to some sect and creed, I must needs justify my attitude.

I find it hard to be just to church organizations, whose observances I find interesting as survivals of an earlier need, but devoid of much present significance. The development of the Christian Church

as an institution seems to me to represent chiefly the efforts of uninspired men to materialize and exploit religious truths whose power over humanity had been demonstrated. In so doing, the spiritual origin has too often been obscured. Perhaps there has been some compensating gain, and if I am to be just I must admit this possibility. Perhaps the ritual of the church has been the means of spiritualizing men and has led them to understand the religious truth within the symbol. Of this I am not a competent judge, for the reason that ritual, though I perceive its symbolical purpose, leaves me cold and unresponsive. I find that church-going makes me less religious rather than more, and that I retain my powers of spiritual perception only as they are left to grow unforced. This is the Protestant instinct, I suppose; the Catholic mind presumably derives strength from forms which to me seem only to veil God from the eyes of men.

My relations referred to the church of their fathers as *the* church, a bland assumption of superiority which irritated me long before I understood its implications. How could a small body of men, professedly Christian, believe theirs the one sure road to truth and themselves highest in divine favor? Truth did not seem so restricted a thing as that nor so easily appropriated. One of my "in-laws" was an ardent expositor of the apostolic succession. The English Church was, in his belief, the one true church; from it the Roman Church had broken away and now wandered in

the paths of error. The political and marital history of Henry VIII did not at all disconcert him in these views. What puzzled me then and astounds me now is a faith in the dependence of spiritual authority upon disputed and unimportant points of secular and ecclesiastical history.

All churches are more or less prone to the same weakness, an inability to accept spiritual truths unless these are buttressed by alleged historical evidence or by miraculous phenomena in the physical world. The fatal defect in all such dependence upon external things lies, of course, in this: weaken or destroy one of the "proofs" by some historical discovery or by some change in scientific theory, and the spiritual authority of the church is immediately impaired. Spiritual truths must have a firmer foundation than this if they are to endure. Churchmen cannot in one breath declare spiritual and physical phenomena to be in two different realms, and then proceed to make the spiritual dependent upon the physical and verifiable through it. In the present stage of the world, when the first mystery surrounding the laws of nature has been somewhat dispelled, justification for spiritual beliefs must be found in the nature and needs of the human soul, not in the violability of the laws of matter or the uncertain testimony of history.

My dislike for churches is undoubtedly due in part to my youthful experience of them and to later casual association with people who were pro-

fessedly religious. It is a hard saying, but to my mind most people are least likable in their religious attitudes and duties. Joy departs from them and spontaneity, and that radiant unquenchable interest in life from which no human activity is estranged. Institutional religion abhors the inquiring mind. The church is the crystallization of human needs and beliefs in an institutional mould. It is of necessity static, or at best viscous and slow-moving. Each change in it, each adaptation to human growth, is at the cost of violence. It cannot change easily. Therefore, because it changes slowly and unwillingly, the church is the refuge of those who are uncomfortable amid change, who desire fixed and unalterable convictions to satisfy their religious cravings. To one whose philosophy is that all beliefs and institutions and even God himself grow constantly and must therefore alter, it is undesirable to adhere to any faith, however admirable. To him a belief is only a mile-stone on the road to truth; it is the road that fascinates him and he can never cease to go onward. This is the first objection to a church and an arbitrary creed: it cramps the free spirit, it confines the vagrant soul. True, it sums within itself the spiritual growth of man to a certain point. But when, as they must, men grow beyond that point, the church becomes a clog upon hastening feet and is no longer the conservator of the human spirit. It becomes of a piece with written constitutions, declarations of faith, the very art

works of man's contriving; it is realized and systematized. It should, therefore, be surpassed.

How greatly we are dependent in our religious beliefs upon an acceptable terminology and figures of speech is evidenced by our present distaste for many of the old hymns, such as that which speaks of a "fountain filled with blood drawn from Emmanuel's veins." "Onward, Christian Soldiers," too, despite its martial vigor, suggests associations inappropriate to a religion of peace. The figure of speech likening Christ to a lamb led to the slaughter is no longer effective to a race far removed from its pastoral origins. The terminology of blood sacrifice and the conception of the sacrament as the blood and body of Christ, even though symbolically interpreted, are offensive to modern ears. Church people would be wise to drop such antiquated phrases, helpful once, perhaps, but no longer so. However, other turns of phrase are more than æsthetically distasteful. A human being who declares himself a worm and unworthy of God's mercy insults his creator. Much of this hypocritical abasement of self survives in theological discourse and in hymns. It is hypocritical because no self-respecting man can believe himself a worm. He knows he is more than that and important in the eyes of God. If religion is to change with the times it must find a place for self-respect and for the man who questions his God, not accepting him, in an agony of fear, as all-powerful and capricious. We must believe our lives of value if we are to live

them worthily, and if we are to respect God we must think of him as one who respects us. Perhaps all this difficulty is only a matter of words, but words are the most important things in the world. They determine our thoughts; and religion, which must grow if it is to live healthily, should realize as the most important condition of that growth the adoption of a terminology intelligible and acceptable to each generation. Then the old hymns and cant phrases will go the way of human sacrifice and other obsolete religious observances.

Religion is too great and constant a need to be apportioned but one day each week and a negligible portion of one's income. In some churches and to many churchmen it means scarcely more than that. It allays but does not satisfy the religious need of those who profess adherence to it. It is restful, to be sure; it lifts the burden of individual responsibility, if not for conduct then for the formulation of principles underlying conduct. It is a refuge for those who do not like to think. Is this too hard a judgment to pass upon the various churches? Does it not ignore the good they have done and minimize the importance of the organized effort they direct and have directed in the past? Perhaps there is some justice in such a demurrer.

The church was instrumental in the spread of Christianity, and in the conversion of the barbarians laid the foundations of our modern civilization.

Yet all the credit for this must not be given the church as an organization. The work done by Christian missionaries, springing from the individual sources of altruism, would have been done equally well had the church not existed as an institution. And, on the other hand, the church, in the restrictions it laid upon the individual thinker and seeker after God, be it Galileo or Wyclif, has been a check upon the spiritual and mental growth of the race. It has fostered learning, it is true, but it has also persecuted the inquiring mind. Curious, is it not, that a man-made institution, nobly designed, conceived, presumably, in the finest ardor of spiritual idealism, should fetter those equally aspiring who follow at a little distance. Their ends may be the same, the truth they seek to express be equally as important, but their vocabulary and symbols are new. It would seem that a phenomenon so universal, repeated in so many forms, calling to us from every human institution, would be recognized and due allowance made for change and growth. A tardy recognition of the inevitability of change may be noted in the amending clauses of political constitutions, but these are usually of a highly conservative nature and an obstacle rather than an aid to progress. In other institutions, notably religious, either no growth is possible or a growth only within rigidly prescribed limits and attainable only with undue pain and effort. Stevenson remarks somewhere that a man observes his past opinions to be always

wrong, only to draw the astounding conclusion that he is right at last. Those who found human institutions seldom leave adequate room for change; they cannot believe that change, save in unimportant details, will ever be needed. Their faith in the product of their own devising precludes all expectation of its growth into something quite different. Yet it is inevitable that every growing thing should alter. If we are wise, then, we shall make provision for its growth, even admitting that change is not always for the better, and may be for the worse.

Yet when the change desired is for the worse, when spiritual fire has died and the old form which expressed it is no longer charged with genuine meaning, it is doubtful if adherence to the form itself is of any value to mankind. Religious adherence to outworn forms does not preserve the inner meanings once resident in those forms. Expression is meaningless to those who do not understand the thing expressed, and to unbelief is added the greater evil of ignorance or hypocrisy. Better no church at all, no institution religious or spiritual, if it must deaden human aspiration for years and centuries before disintegrating.

The quarrel of our age with the church, with some sects to a greater degree than with others, is twofold, that of the individual seeker after truth, who wishes to find new interpretations of life, God and nature, or at least to fashion a fresh vocabulary expressive of a changed point of view; secondly,

that of the social reformer who finds the church hostile or indifferent to the development of new institutions designed to serve a better and freer economic and social life. Of the first criticism I have written briefly. Of the second I wish to speak a little, both in criticism and in defense of the church, the latter for the reason that in these days the church has rather the worst of the contest. Its defenses are spiritual and are not accorded the validity due them, for ours is a material-minded and practical generation.

My own experience has shown me the need of something more than altruism as a working creed for life. Socialism or any similar belief does not go to the roots of experience, does not satisfy the demand of the soul for ultimate explanations. Of itself it does not suffice, does not permanently evade the human desire to justify existence. The church in so far as it gratifies this normal craving is highly useful. Ideally, it does something no other institution can do. If it fails to give the satisfaction it promises, the fault lies not in the aim but in the organization of the institution for the attainment of that aim. It should aid the individual to find his relation to God, should furnish him the spiritual incentives which will help him to the greatest self-development and to the truest and finest relation with his fellow men; it should be the fountainhead of inspiration. If it is this, perhaps it need be nothing more. Perhaps it is not called upon to outline a definite programme of social progress, but may rest content with so moulding human

nature that out of human activities will spring noble institutions. But does it do this? Does it furnish individual ideals for social conduct? Must it not relate spiritual truths to such ideals more closely than it does?

The reformer, the socialist, the idealist find the church lacking at this point. For if the church may legitimately refuse to organize better social institutions on the plea that this is not its business, so, too, it should express no hostility to human efforts toward social amelioration. But this purely neutral position it seems the church cannot assume. When it does not align itself on the side of progressive movements it inevitably opposes them and is a check to their advance. Reformers within the church recognize this fact, and the effort of the day is to make church organizations come out openly in behalf of specific social reform. This is one movement. Opposed is the traditional attitude of the church in denouncing all innovations. Unfortunately this is apparently the stronger force, and though generalizations are hazardous and subject to qualification, I think it is fair to say that the church is hostile to all specific movements for social and economic betterment, be these factory and child-labor legislation, woman's suffrage, government ownership of the means of production, socialism or whatever else. The record of the English bishops in the House of Lords and the declared attitude of the Roman Church I offer as evidence of my statement.

The church cannot in practice, whatever its

theoretical justification, withdraw from a direct participation in community life. The spiritual beliefs of the individual are too closely related to social conduct to be divorced from it, and, though the church may legitimately emphasize the one more than the other, its sympathies should lie with progressive movements; it must recognize the inevitability of change in human institutions, even while clinging to spiritual truths it believes to be permanent. If it does not do this, it will unconsciously but inevitably assume an attitude of indifference or hostility to all innovations, and this is fatal, for it alienates the best spirits of any age, those who feel most deeply and think most effectively. Yet the record of organized religion, from that at which Christ railed to that which evokes the contempt and anger of present-day reformers, is such that it seems improbable the church as an institution will ever contribute much to social readjustments.

The best spirits of our time seek their inspiration elsewhere than in the church; they find it in art, in literature, in their direct knowledge of God and in the teachings of Christ. What would Christ think of the churches of to-day? we are moved to ask. Would he not find them law-bound, mindful of the letter and forgetful of the spirit, given over to the money-changers and indifferent to the landless and homeless — truly indifferent, though offering them hope of heavenly recompense and doling them a debasing charity? So, at least,

thinks many a radical and reformer who sees in organized religion the concerted effort to perpetuate the evil forces which Christ devoted his life to attacking. Christ, say some, was the first socialist. And certainly the church has never been able to explain away his denunciations of wealth.

The value of form in church ceremonies must be a matter of individual experience. To some, a highly formal ceremony, each part of which is a symbol of spiritual truth, is a consolation and source of strength. The spiritual desires find outward expression and are thereby fortified. Yet, whether or no one gathers inspiration from the symbolism of worship, an increased spiritual knowledge may lead one to see new meanings in age-old forms and ceremonies. Sometimes the meanings are such as the worshippers themselves seem not to understand, as though men had created something greater than themselves, more fraught with meaning than they guessed. An artist or poet may marvel at his own work as something not his but eternal, touched with implications he could never consciously formulate. In the symbolism of faith, the like may be true.

The communion service, liberally interpreted, is no mere cannibalistic ritual, a theme for theological dispute and a revolting survival of savagery. It is an act symbolical of human desire to feel at one with God, a profession of willingness to aid him in his purposes, and valuable in so far as it makes that aspiration evident to the communicant. So,

too, with the devotional observances of kneeling, crossing, and the like, particularly if done in the company of others. A desire to act with others is thereby implied. All mankind, so doing, symbolize their unity of purpose and their kinship with the spiritual forces which we sum up in the term "God." Baptism is the formal dedication of the individual to the universal duties of life, particularly significant if the one baptized is mature and conscious of the meaning of his act. The observances of Good Friday and Easter may be made to indicate our belief in the humanity and the goodness of Christ and our faith that, though life crucifies all of us, we shall know a finer life after death, that there is truly a resurrection of the spirit which Christ's death and resurrection symbolize for us. Perhaps Christ in calling God his Father meant only this, that men should view his life as typical of all life. To me this is a finer belief than that Christ set himself apart from men and regarded God as closer to him than to others. The Nativity, finally, may serve to symbolize the birth of every man into the spiritual world and his kinship with God. How much of this belief was consciously expressed in the establishment of form, ceremonies and observances it is hard to say. But it is legitimate to read these meanings into the ritual of the church if they exist for us.

In creeds, in myths and in dogmas there lie embedded always elements of enduring truth, however fanciful and evanescent their garniture may be.

One need not be a Calvinist to believe in original sin. This may be no more than the human weakness which seeks to avoid the pain of struggle, which seeks to enjoy rather than to do. It is yet profoundly true, for with this sin we contend all our days. It is a sin partaking of the nature of things and for it we are not responsible. It is our duty, notwithstanding, to overcome it and cast it out. Salvation by faith and salvation by works are also true. We need faith in the importance of our tasks if we are to labor cheerfully and well, and by the deeds so inspired we realize our natures and the possibilities within us, and thus truly achieve salvation. Predestination and free-will, as I have tried to show in another place, are both in some degree true, one of the paradoxes of our world which we have to reconcile. Even the devil has meaning, though we may cease to think of him as a person. He is, perhaps, only inertia, the *not-life* which God, the conscious force, seeks to overcome and to transmute into life. We are truly damned and our road is the road to destruction when we cease to put forth effort and slip back to a less vivid state of being than the best of which we are capable. We enter, then, upon the death in life, and the wages of sin — which is only our failure to respond to life's incentives within us — is verily death. These newer meanings lie ready to our hand in doctrines which we usually think of as outworn. Yet it is best that we pour the old wine into new bottles. Few of us look beyond the

label. The theological disputes of a former time are meaningless to us, because we will not make the effort to get beyond a strange and repellent terminology to the inner and still vital meaning. The old truths have constantly to be rephrased if they are to remain true.

I have made, it seems, some justification of the church, of ritual and of dogma. I should be foolish not to admit their uses, though their possibilities for harm seem to me more apparent. If only they could retain their vitality and grow unceasingly, shedding the old dress when it becomes antiquated, it would be hard to deny their immense usefulness. There are few persons who would not wish to be members of a church if it were sufficiently broad and universal, if it were indeed *catholic* and could be made to include every one with spiritual aspirations, whatever his creed and individual philosophy. Perhaps a happier society than ours may be competent to organize such an institution, one hospitable to all men of all shades of belief, but united in a common bond of spiritual purpose. Had I the planning of such a church I should like to incorporate in it certain professions consistent with the little philosophy I have outlined, particularly such as declare our kinship with and joy in all things living and even in such as we think to be inanimate, beliefs which Saint Francis expressed very beautifully in his "Canticle of the Sun."

Few natures, even the most spiritual, can hold

an unshaken faith in the reality of a spiritual world permeating and enveloping this we know. The evidence of the senses is our chief reliance in life, and we find it hard sometimes to believe in anything else. But we have always the memory of believing moments, and can never absolutely divorce the past from the present. It is a part of us, however much we may seek to forget it. Also, it is not well for every one to dwell too much on spiritual mysteries. At our times of need they reassure us, but for the most part our practical world demands that we be alive to other things. If we dream too much we are in danger of forgetting our immediate tasks, and this is not a sensible proceeding. The spiritual world, if real, will persist despite our inconstant awareness of it, and will not be destroyed by temporary neglect. It has its functions as we have ours in a lesser but more immediate world. Yet it is necessary that we have some moments of intimacy with it, and it is well if these are not too few.

In our inspired moments we feel a kinship with mankind and the universe which leads us to forget our trials and our pain. These become relatively insignificant and drop from us as we bathe in the sea of life. We feel this emotion sometimes when, as one of many, we strive to realize a common purpose. More often we find peace and a sense of unity when we are perfectly adjusted to nature and feel in harmony with it. In a forest, on the sea or among mountains, we may almost feel

nature breathing and rejoicing in existence. We lose something of ourselves and become a part of something greater. But we are sentient individuals, nevertheless. Perhaps Nirvana denotes this sense of absorption in life or God. But if we are to realize it we must retain a seeing mind, be conscious of our individual emotions. Can we both lose individuality and retain it? Some such paradox seems implied, but it is not, I think, a perfect paradox. Both the Oriental and the Occidental ideals of happiness may be in part true, and a compromise embracing both be truer than either. When we long for death we do not really wish to lose all consciousness, but only to shift the burden of living to broader shoulders than ours, conscious the while that we still exist. Most of our conceptions of death imply this power of enjoying a release from the vexing problems of individual conduct and responsibility. That is to say, we think of death as life, but life freed from the burdens which are at times intolerable.

Love of nature is a deep human instinct, a manifestation of religious feeling, for in the realization of our kinship with the world in which we live we become aware of our closeness to God. But like many other vital and deep-rooted needs, it suffers at the hands of sentimentalists. The worship of nature is often something of a cult whose devotees profess inspiration in the sight of every common flower, and who wish to transform all our healthy relationships with the world of outdoors to the

expression of a religious ritual. Deep and true emotions are seldom so self-conscious. Love, God and nature are wholesome human needs, but we should seek to gratify them without too much comment, and derive strength from them unconsciously as we draw life from the air. We live more naturally when we do this, and do not degrade our deepest feelings by thinking always about them. When nature is a conscious need we should seek the outdoors as we do a healing spring. Then the meaning of nature will come home to us more directly than at other times. But the mood of elation passes, to be renewed at the moment of need. If we try to prolong it we are in danger of becoming sentimentalists and play with our emotions, trying to keep them alive, as the Byronic lover seeks a new mistress to fan the embers of passion. The activities of life forbid such morbidity, as does the inability of the soul to live at a high emotional pitch for more than a brief space of time. It is our recognition of this truth that makes us weary of the literature of passion, of nature poetry and of excessive churchgoing. Emotions, like muscles, become tired from too much use.

But though nature-worship may easily be abused, it seems probable that the ugliness which man has contrived to bring into the modern world by his adaptation of natural forces to his use, is one of the causes of the weakening of religious faith among us. When I see our industrial centres, our

factories, our railroad yards and warehouses, I am moved to wish I had been a voyageur looking for the first time upon the unviolated forests and prairies. The primitive life and the state of nature are neither beautiful nor happy. We have improved upon them in many respects, but we have contrived a deal of ugliness in so doing. The beauty of wild life flees before the approach of our civilization. The deer and the prairie flowers go the way of the pine forests. And in the place of what we destroy we create a ragged and monotonous countryside and hideous and badly built towns. The white man's civilization is as devastating as a plague; in its heedlessness of beauty it is as barbaric as the ravages of the Huns. This disregard of beauty and lack of respect for the forces which mould us to so great a degree is one of our forms of blasphemy and irreligion. A people so dull and unimaginative, so irresponsive to the motherly advances of nature cannot be other than deeply irreligious. If we reverenced God, if we believed the world to be a sentient organism of which we are small but individual parts, we should be led to respect other individuals, whether men or birds or beasts, if they contribute to the beauty and efficiency of nature. Perhaps, if we were sufficiently reverent, we might some time understand the beautiful words of Saint Francis, who thought of the wind, the sun and the moon as his brothers in the fatherhood of God. This is no mere simple-mindedness and childishness, but is expressive of a

deep and true intimacy with the manifestations of God. The poet who sees the world as the garment of God and the stars as the brain of heaven is more truly religious than the theologian who sees only depravity in human nature, and in this beautiful and terrible world only a vale of darkness and corruption.

I can do no better in concluding this chapter than to quote what I composed some years ago, a credo which I find embodies my beliefs now as then. I have called it "A Vision of the Church Universal."

A VISION OF THE CHURCH UNIVERSAL

My grandson led me to the door of the great cathedral. It was like the vast and beautiful churches of the Middle Ages, light, soaring, and ornamented with statue and grotesque, yet all apparently of modern design. I paused to admire.

"It is widely praised, though some think it rather too imitative," said my grandson.

"Only a Catholic would have worshipped in a church such as this, in my day," I said. "And yet you say it is not Roman?"

"Roman and Protestant, too, a cathedral for Buddhist and Mohammedan. The Church Universal knows no limitation of sect or creed. Here all men who love their fellows may meet together and with a sense of comradeship offer thanksgiving for the benefits and obligation all feel. Here they may voice the aspirations common to all good men regardless of race and color. This is the great and universal church. Let us enter and you will see."

The usher met us, and because I was old led us far to the front where I might hear and see. Those near by smiled and nodded to me but did not speak. The vast expectant congregation was hushed and in the silence I felt a sense of elation, the joy that comes from being one of many, the individual consciousness submerged in a mighty and purposed whole. So tense was the spell that I could scarcely look around me. Yet I saw that the aerie heights of the cathedral were radiant with sunlight broken to a thousand tints as it streamed through a miracle of stained glass. Below, the light was chastened and blended, falling softly on the upturned silent faces.

Then the tones of some invisible orchestra of a hundred muted strings stole into the vast reaches of the church. Old memories stirred as I sought to recall that celestial music. A boy's voice thrilled forth in an "Ave Maria" of Palestrina and I remembered from many years before a visit to a Catholic cathedral and the inspiration of that music which had strangely stirred a somewhat bigoted Protestant, one a little afraid of all poetic ritual and music too sacredly beautiful.

The boy ceased and there was a moment's pause. Then at a reading-desk to the front of the cathedral appeared the priest, who read in a beautiful and sonorous voice this invocation:

"Ye who with reverent hearts are gathered together in all humility and thankfulness of spirit, men and women of divers creeds and races, toilers by land and mariners of air and sea, makers and refiners, what seek ye together?"

To this the congregation answered in unison:

"Many are we, seeking after God in many ways, each, in his various fashion, by land, by air and by sea, striving to do with honor that of the world's toil which has been granted to him. Our creeds are several; the ways of our fathers, the good of which it is our desire to foster and to increase, are yet more various. Yet great as

are the differences which divide us, still greater are the bonds which unite us in the fellowship of worship. We acknowledge our common brotherhood. We meet together as the sons of one Father, as stewards in the heritage of the fair earth, which it is ours to enjoy equally and preserve unimpaired to the delight of our children."

Priest: "Man, the sovereign of earthly creatures, has cause for rejoicing in the means of happiness which are his."

All: "He has pleasure in the simple things of life, in his senses which bring to him each day new and wonderful revelations of inanimate and living things in the world about him, and in the perception of beauty, and in the speculative mind which finds in all things food for pleasurable thought."

Priest: "We are thankful for the simple human relationships of which our life is made up."

All: "For our fathers and mothers who brought us into being; for the companionable state of matrimony; for the great blessedness of children; and for the brotherly association of neighbor and fellow worker."

Priest: "Yet with joys and pleasurable relationships are involved duties and obligations. These it is our privilege to acknowledge."

All: "The productiveness of the earth and the beauty of all natural objects we will strive to preserve and to increase. The waste and barren places of the earth we will make habitable. The grandeur of forest and mountain, ravaged and impaired by the thoughtlessness of men, it shall be ours to restore that the children of men may not be strangers to the loveliness of the world about them. And in all our labors and enterprises it shall be our endeavor not to create ugliness, which is abhorrent, but ever to make that which is necessary, beautiful, both in itself and in the making."

Priest: "Nor are we forgetful of the unfortunate among

us, who, by reason of poverty, disease, and sin are unable to enjoy fully the blessings of this life."

All: "Men and women, doing each one the best that is in him to further the welfare of all by the creation of things beautiful and useful, should be granted the means of life according to their need; and leisure for the pursuit of knowledge, and for the expression of self after whatsoever fashion is pleasant to them.

"It is our shame that all are not yet free to do so. Therefore, through love and self-denial we will strive unceasingly to cast out and destroy both poverty and sin. May our hearts be strengthened in this resolve through the inspiration of this gathering of a thousand souls bent to the selfsame end."

Priest: "There is no perfect happiness possible to a man if his brother want or be in sin."

All: "To some it is therefore permitted to taste the blessedness of toil in the hard places of the earth for the good of their fellows. To these, fortunate in their strength, comes happiness, because the joy of all men is made thereby more possible of attainment. Grant that each one of us may grow in strength to take upon himself some part of the world's pain to the end that such pain may cease to be."

Priest: "Yet we would not destroy all pain whereby the soul of man is stirred and becomes strong."

All: "Pain of the spirit which dwells in a man like a fire, may cleanse him of evil. All needless and fruitless pain, pain of the body, the pain of hate, of evil, of all sin and unwholesomeness let it be our task to wash from human existence. In so doing we may be made more sensitive to the pangs of the spirit which are the inevitable birth-pains of a nobler life. These we would not evade, for through them lies the path to ever-increasing joy and beauty."

Priest: "Let each of us declare the faith that is in him, that it may grow strong and guide him in his daily acts."

All: "I believe that what I aspire to be I may, by striving, ever more nearly approach. Therefore I set before myself the highest ideal of which I can conceive.

"I believe that no one can find happiness in himself alone, but only in the welfare and happiness of others. Therefore I wish to do in this life whatever may be of most service to my fellow men.

"I believe that men may make this earth a home worthy of an ideal brotherhood. I am glad that I have a place therein; nor do I believe my place so insignificant that I may conduct myself other than in the best fashion of which I am capable.

"I believe that cheerfulness and kindliness are the greatest of all virtues, for in these I touch most closely the lives of those about me. Therefore I will comport myself so that I may bring joy to my neighbor, who is every man, of whatsoever race and creed.

"And I believe that it lies with me, as one among men, to do my part in the advance toward that goal, ever receding and ever unattained, which makes life upon this earth an heroic thing. To the infinite progress that is to be I wish to contribute my share, cheered by the conviction that those about me are of like mind and purpose."

There ensued a silence eloquent of the unspoken prayer of each of that vast assemblage. How long it lasted I do not know. Then the invisible orchestra played again, and when it had ceased the congregation poured quietly from the arched doorways. My grandson and I stood again in the sunlight.

I said: "Of this I had dreamed but never thought to see my dream realized."

"Every man dreamed the same dream," said my grandson, "and thus it became a reality."

CHAPTER XI

SOCIAL IDEALS

Social progress or retrogression we unthinkingly gauge, each of us, by some test peculiar to himself or to his class, disregarding the innumerable points of view from which such a test is inadequate. A "gentleman of the old school" will discern in the declining popularity of a classical education or in a lessened interest in the "sport of kings" the decay of civilization. The materialist measures our advance upon ancient times in terms of machinery and our gain from year to year in our increased wealth per capita, or in our larger crops of wheat and corn. Social progress is not to be determined by such a rule of thumb. Conceive of the hopeful forces, those which seek the establishment of ideal conditions of life, as an army with a vast battle front. There will be gains here and losses there, and only as we review the whole campaign over a considerable period of time can we pass a competent judgment upon it. We have, also, to be sure that our standards of measurement are dependable.

Even if one is optimistic of betterment, convinced that we really do approach the one far-off divine event, and that, though progress is slow,

our defeats are relatively negligible, he must admit that our advance is uneven, that individual morals, scientific knowledge, artistic achievement and social institutions and ideals do not keep step together. Observe the contrast of our technical efficiency and our moral inadequacy as demonstrated by modern warfare. Our knowledge of ways in which to kill our fellow men far exceeds the inhibiting passion of brotherly love or a desire for peace. Morally we are not abreast of our technical skill. A similar incongruity is apparent in our mastery of economic forces for the acquisition of wealth, and the tardy growth of social ideals which make for an equitable distribution of this wealth. We observe that the material resources of society are far greater than ever before, but that poverty has not been correspondingly diminished, if, indeed, it is not actually greater. Our social ideals and institutions have not kept pace with our scientific and economic advance.

The reason for this disharmony so apparent in civilization is obvious. Desire for knowledge and the pursuit of wealth are individual; every man seeks them of his own initiative. The world of science and industry, dominated by these individual ambitions, changes rapidly, but society as a whole and the social institutions under which we live remain much as before. They alter slowly to meet the demands of new economic conditions, but they are always far in the rear. Not enough thought is devoted to them to keep them abreast

of our needs. Our interest and attention are not given to the mastery of problems of social readjustment. A few thinkers devote themselves to the task, but these are not sufficiently numerous, nor is their influence sufficiently great to overcome the forces of selfishness and inertia which tend to keep human institutions as they always have been.

Society is not yet agreed, even, that its welfare depends upon taking thought. There is a widely prevalent belief that institutions readjust themselves in some mysterious fashion, without conscious thought and organized effort. It is a curious belief, comparable to this, for illustration, that an army will work effectively without a general staff to direct its efforts. We have not yet organized a general staff for the management of society. Yet it is hard to see how society can ever reconstitute itself unless it does so deliberately and selects its wisest members and those with greatest vision for the task. This is something much more than the hit-or-miss politics we know, for it demands the formulation of an ideal to the attainment of which society shall consciously direct its efforts. Political leaders do not formulate remote ideals. They are "practical" men who devise temporary expedients designed to meet importunate difficulties; at the best they offer palliatives which do not look beyond the immediate need. If the world is an ever-growing organism, and if it changes only as we take thought, agreement upon remote ideals is evidently necessary to a consistent

advance. It is the duty of every man to acquire such ideals by deliberate effort and then to co-operate with his fellows for the realization of those upon which all or most can agree. But is the formulation of such ideals possible? Can agreement ever be reached? We can at least enumerate a few which our philosophy has led us to think desirable and discuss the difficulties inherent in their materialization.

Who would not wish society to offer every member of it the greatest possible opportunity for self-realization? We picture the kingdom of heaven as a place in which every one does right of innate desire, and this right conduct means self-expression which in no way hinders another in a like realization. We think of this ideal forlornly, as impossible of earthly attainment, and in a spirit of pessimism deny the inner prompting to do what we can to aid the world in the attainment of its best hopes, however remote. Because the goal seems unattainable we do not make even a start toward it. But it is our duty to contrive the highest ideals we can, even while we recognize clearly that they will inevitably be displaced by others as soon as their realization becomes at all imminent. The charm of life lies in the fact that there is something unknown beyond the farthest horizon of our thought. But what this unknown is we cannot guess until we have gone as far as we can with the thoughts and ideals we now possess. Curiosity, if nothing more, should lead us to go as fast as we

can on a quest infinitely long and for an end which will never be attained because, when we near it, we shall desire another end even more remote.

The most perfect human society of which I can conceive is one in which, as in the kingdom of heaven, every one is free to do as he likes, but wishes to do only what will make for the happiness of others, as well as for his own. Social and individual ideals are then one, self-realization and idealism but the two names for the same desire. Such a state is one governed only by the moral law. It is the freest of democracies, knowing neither king nor president. For its realization it demands, necessarily, a perfected race of human beings. In the terms of political theory it is a state of anarchism. I hardly need point out that anarchism so defined has nothing in common with anarchy as we usually employ the term. Its attainment is not to be achieved by casting off law and restraint. It demands, instead, a long course of discipline whereby every human being shall be trained to take his part in a freer society. If we are agreed that this ideal is desirable, however remote, it remains to consider the training necessary for the ultimate realization of our Utopia.

It is too much to hope that any considerable number of persons can be brought soon to believe in the possibility of a state so remote or to make sacrifices for its attainment, an attainment from which their posterity, not they themselves, will benefit. Yet such an ideal can grow, has grown

and may in time become the actuating principle of social conduct, once the conception that human desires may be realized through effort and only so is widely held. The acceptance of this belief is fundamental. Is it not the profoundest of truths that anything is possible if we desire it sufficiently? Ideals do not substantiate themselves. They are attained only as we deliberately accept them and make sacrifices for them.

The practical steps necessary to the realization of a social ideal must necessarily be largely a matter of experiment. No one can tell to a certainty that any form of social reorganization will accomplish the desired end. Experience will show defects in the most carefully formulated measures, but experiments must nevertheless be made, for it is certain that, defective as this course may be, it is the only one open to us. It is the method of nature, which experimented to find man, and is still at work endeavoring to fashion the race of supermen.

"On that long road she went to seek mankind;
Here were the darkling coverts that she beat
To find the Hider she was sent to find;
Here the distracted footprints of her feet
Whereby her soul's Desire she came to greet.

Yes, in the dim brain of the jellied fish
That is and is not living—moved and stirred
From the beginning a mysterious wish,
A vision, a command, a fatal Word:
The name of Man was uttered, and they heard.

Upwards along the æons of old war
They sought him: wing and shank-bone, claw and bill
Were fashioned and rejected; wide and far
They roamed the twilight jungles of their will;
But still they sought him, and desired him still.

Man they desired, but mind you, Perfect Man,
The radiant and the loving, yet to be!"

I wish to suggest here certain of the more important changes in our society and educational system which seem to me of prime necessity. First, is that insuring equality of income. Upon the desirability of this, socialists themselves are not agreed, for though it is a basic principle of socialism that the means of production — tools and capital — shall be owned and utilized by the state, many socialists believe that the worker himself should be paid according to his economic value to society — postulating a decent minimum wage for the least efficient. A great organizer of industry might, therefore, receive a fabulous income for his services, though he would never be permitted to become a capitalist and might be forbidden to bequeath his savings to his children. This concession to individualism is based on the belief that men will not give their best unless economically rewarded therefor. I believe this is a fundamental error, one based on a lower view of human nature than the facts warrant us in taking. I cannot prove that a more charitable belief is universally justified, but I can cite some evidence in its support.

Artists, writers, teachers, scientists, and many professional men of all vocations are actuated in their efforts very slightly if at all by the ambition to acquire wealth. The love of their work and the desire to exercise their faculties to the utmost is the force impelling them to accept comparative poverty or to persist in their callings when economic security has been attained. The love of power and its expression is the true impulse. Power, however, does not imply the subjugation of others to itself. The artist loves power in his art; that is, the adequate expression of his ideas and of the beauty he perceives in the world. In industry the love of power may be only a love of efficient methods of making useful things and the elimination of waste. It is not necessarily despotic in its desire to control the destinies of other men. The artisan, too, knows power in the pleasure he derives from work well done. His is the artist's pleasure, and I think we make a fundamental error whenever we assume this to be the peculiar property of any class. It is the very essence of life. Men are a part of nature, whose desire is to create new and finer forms of life. Therefore men desire children finer than themselves, and they seek in their own work to direct the blundering and wasteful forces of the world to definite and useful ends. Men, possessed of reason developed at such cost through untold æons, are the means whereby life and order emerge from not-life and disorder. The artistic instinct is only the desire to make the

world more live, and it exists in all men, though in varying degree. Our society and our educational systems might well devote their entire efforts to bringing this instinct to adequate expression. The only reward it asks is the opportunity for exercise. In many it is so strong that it will gratify itself even at the cost of bodily deprivation and suffering. If economic security is assured, it will work even more effectively.

For a man to have too little or too much of the world's goods is equally harmful in that either checks the free realization of self, cultivating selfishness instead, and stunting a rightful sense of fellowship with his kind. We may interpret in this light Christ's saying that it is harder for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven than for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle. The possession of great wealth too often destroys a man's sense of fellowship. If we believe the kingdom of heaven to be a democracy, how can those who are kept apart from their kind in this world attain the spiritual grace to love their neighbors as themselves? Poverty is an evil equally great. It fosters hatred, hostility and envy; even more, it restricts the free exercise of native powers and, like wealth, it encourages selfishness. Our social system, both in its worship of wealth and in its imposition of poverty upon so great a number of people, does its worst to add to the sum of human selfishness. If a man is to provide for his family, if he is to find leisure in which to exercise his best

powers, he must acquire money, and too often what he manages to win for himself is another's loss. It is a debasing process, destructive of the finest human ideals. Let any one who doubts that money is the root of all evil contemplate some family quarrelling over the estate of a deceased relative. All the meanness and pettiness possible to human nature will be only too apparent. Yet our society, with the premium it attaches to wealth and the terrible penalties it exacts of poverty, is largely responsible for such a depressing spectacle. There are finer qualities in human nature, which a saner economic and social system could bring out with equal ease.

It is extraordinary how much knowledge and art of enduring value our world has produced. What might not men do were they free to turn their minds to things more important than earning a living. The theory that poverty is the spur to achievement is true — if ever — only in an economic sense. To the finest expression of human powers poverty is often an insurmountable obstacle. The world points to its Shakespeares who have somehow contrived to emerge from bondage. But it can never know how many men of extraordinary powers fail to enrich the world because of some preventable disease, some weakness born of hunger or a lack of the necessary training and leisure. For even when there is no unusual condition, no preventable weakness, the normal conditions of industrial life require the expenditure of

so much energy that he is an unusual man who can husband a margin of strength for the greater things, the things that count in the history of the world. Society is tragically wasteful of its finest human possibilities, its latent wealth in character and genius. Mr. H. G. Wells defines our society as "muddle." It is hardly more, and if our day leaves anything of permanent worth to posterity, the incentive thereto will lie in the unquenchable idealism of exceptional men and their courage in the face of all but crushing hardships. They will do good work, not because of our social organization but despite it.

As I write it is a hard winter to the poor, for there is much unemployment. Men seeking odd jobs come daily to the door. One has just finished beating a rug and gone his way. Who knows what will become of him? He may starve or fall ill and die; there is greater likelihood that he will become discouraged and cease to retain his ambition and self-respect; then he will become a social parasite. All he asks is work, and there is plenty of work in the world — and yet many women and children live always on the verge of starvation. What pretense to civilization can we make while these conditions remain? We drift, leaving to individual charity what is the first duty of the state. We admit that the times are out of joint, but we do nothing collectively to set them right. We have neither the will nor the intelligence; a few altruists and groups of specialists nibble at the edges of

social problems, that is all. A more enlightened age than ours, passing judgment upon us, will remember these facts rather than those of which we prefer to think. All the products of individual genius will not outweigh our social apathy and neglect, any more than the art works of the Italian Renaissance — which surpass ours — can compensate for the cruelty, the license and the tyranny of that age.

I wonder at the endless patience of the poor, especially nowadays when the admonitions of the church mean little to them. The unemployed tramp the streets of Chicago demanding bread, while the newspapers, those champions of respectability and order, misrepresent the pitiful speeches and translate their cries for justice into threats of anarchy and violence. The poor are not dangerous. Hired thugs and strike-breakers shoot down miners and factory workers, but the poor do not arm themselves and storm the banks and warehouses. The wonder is that men with only unhappy lives to lose should submit so pathetically to the laws which are of so little value to them. Do they think that to endure is to grow strong, or believe that the meek shall inherit the earth? Yet if a man is to perish of starvation and weariness, even though he is not moved to slay others, why does he not die so conspicuously that he will cause at least a momentary unpleasantness for those of us whose business it is to make the world a place in which he can live decently? Conspicu-

ous sacrifice we should find distasteful, and were it common it might go far to disillusion us with this civilization of ours. Happily, the forlorn and hopeless who can no longer live creep out of the world quietly, leaving at best a few lines in the "city brevities" to record their departure.

The workman who soldiers or is guilty of sabotage, who gives as little as he can for as much as he can get, is the natural product of our industrial system. He is not an admirable object, but we cannot rightly dismiss him, as we try to do, by declaring his inefficiency the product of natural laziness and meanness. We give him no great incentive to honest work, and he needs some other stimulus than the satisfaction of work well done. This will suffice ultimately, but not in such a society as ours. We exact of him as much as we can; he extorts from us as much as we will pay. But we prejudge him when we say he can never be brought to a better state of mind; we must first devise an industrial system which shall offer him in return for his best work a dignified place in the world, one in which altruism as well as self-interest will not seem to him suicidal. Morality, the balance struck between self-interest and altruism, cannot thrive in a society which emphasizes only self-interest.

The first step in the establishment of a better social system I believe to be, therefore, the sweeping away of all inequalities of income. Such an innovation would work little hardship to good men.

The selfish would be the ones to suffer, and not all of them, for some would profit and some lose. The idler and wastrel could no longer destroy the world's wealth, but would be forced to work. The worker who does as little as he can would get more than he is worth, as now, but I can see no social loss in this. The two, loss and gain, would offset each other, and the men of ideals, whom I take to be the vast majority, would be much better off. For consider the modified education which would set itself to the elimination of evils persisting in the transformed state.

We talk much of the material value of the worker to the community. In the losses incurred in war we include the industrial cost ensuing upon the deaths of workers. But we do little to conserve this greatest wealth of the state. We permit the worker to be killed, crippled and worn out before his time. Yet if it is true that a nation's wealth is in its citizens, that nation is poor which does not develop and exact the utmost power latent in its members. The conservation of this wealth is a social problem involving the whole reorganization of society. The training of the young — granted an adequate physique, food, clothing and opportunity for play — is more properly an educational problem.

Our educational system has only begun the care of children's bodies as a preparation for the training of their minds: to see that they are properly nourished, their teeth cared for, consumptive ten-

dencies checked and the like. But the school obviously comes too late to the task. The boy or girl, to be a good citizen, should be born of healthy parents, should be properly fed in infancy, should have opportunity for play, and should be, in short, a normal child. These advantages must be his if he is to derive the proper benefits from his education. Our society does not insure this normal growth, for it has not yet gone to the root of the problem and destroyed poverty. The visitor from Utopia would marvel at our illogical system of caring for the poor and the unfit. A man injured in his trade is largely dependent upon private charity. His children are not usually cared for unless he dies. When they are orphaned the state sometimes steps in and gives them an institutional home and some sort of an education. Here, as in all our social ills, our practice is to employ palliatives for an evil which should never exist. We permit disease, bad housing and poverty to do their work with the unfortunate; then we endeavor to undo the ills we have permitted. Obviously, before we can make good citizens of all our children we must institute such social changes as will insure their normal growth to the time we take them in hand for educational purposes. These changes and the means thereto have been discussed by many thinkers. I need not enlarge upon them here. To be sure, not all the means we should employ in every instance are a matter of agreement; these must be worked out experimentally.

But though the problem is a difficult one, agreement upon the evils to be eliminated is the main thing. Social thinkers are agreed upon many points, particularly upon the need of avoiding extreme poverty.

A wise educational system is one sufficiently flexible to permit in every student the best development of his individual possibilities. The street-sweeper's son with an artistic gift must be given the training worthy of it or society is the loser. If he has no unusual powers he should be trained to do the thing he likes and can do best. Every one likes the work best suited to him. Admittedly the recognition of latent power in the child is a difficult task, but a thoughtful system of training can do much to simplify it. A training too narrowly vocational will never permit the display of faculties more useful in another field. Cultural training, again, may prevent the display of aptitude for a trade. A system which does not test the student in all possible ways and bring out the best in him is obviously inadequate. It must needs be a flexible system, then, and more heedful of the needs of the individual than of consistency and mechanical efficiency. The danger of a socialistic system of society would lie, of course, just here, that some individuals might be forced into work for which they were not well fitted, or, it is more probable, work which was not the best of which they were capable.

A system of education in part vocational and in

part cultural, compulsory to the age of sixteen or eighteen, and permitting elective higher courses for talented students, could easily be devised. If to this were added the opportunity of retrieving an initial mistake upon the later discovery of tastes and powers developed in maturity, the possibility of serious and irreparable errors in determining the occupations of workers would be minimized. The boy who elects to be a bricklayer and later develops a taste for medicine should have an opportunity to become a doctor. It will be harder for him to do so than if he had made his choice earlier, but still the chance should be his.

I have assumed that every boy and girl should be trained to some particular task. Specialization seems inevitable, but in a well-constituted society it need not preclude opportunity for culture and an enjoyable life. With equal incomes for artisan, laborer and professional man, and with every member of the community engaged in a useful occupation, even routine toil need not demand so much of any man that he will be exhausted and shut off from cultural avocations. His truest life may lie outside his occupation, for the more mechanical and disagreeable his task the fewer hours he should be required to devote to it. Our practice is the exact converse; the more disagreeable the toil, the longer the hours and the less the pay.

The difficulty arising at this point has been met by the suggestion that the irreducible minimum of unpleasant toil be shared equally. This prac-

tice could be voluntary or, if necessary, society could resort to conscription as now in military service. Two years of disagreeable work would be a wholesome post-graduate course for young men about to engage in a profession or a trade. It could not hurt them while they were young and enthusiastic, and later they would be glad of the experience and discipline. Were this service required of every one, there would, too, be no social stigma attached to participation in the unpleasant work of the world. I can imagine a cultured, healthy young man working six hours a day mining coal or collecting garbage, and spending his leisure with books or in sports and enjoying life immensely. The unhappiness of the young comes most often from the conviction that they are of no use in the world, from this and from their uncertainty as to the future. The assurance that they were needed and that their material welfare was provided for would make life brighter than is possible in our society save in a few favored instances.

The opposition which radical innovations stir in the breast of the average man is such as he does not analyze, but which he justifies on quite irrelevant grounds. Few would refuse assured comfort for themselves and their children as an alternative to problematic wealth and possible poverty. The wide-spread distrust of the socialistic state lies in the imputation either that all therein shall be moulded to a pattern, or that, if differences persist,

all men shall be considered equal in every respect, despite inequalities of character and ability. Monotonous uniformity of character is, of course, highly undesirable; the precise opposite is the ideal and aim. Also, we wish to select our friends and intimates according to our taste. A society which forced us to do otherwise would not last a week. I do not greatly care for most of my fellow men as boon companions. I do not wish all or many of them to dine with me or to share my library. But I do desire that every one shall have an equal freedom of choice, and that he shall have equal material comforts, equal opportunity to make the best of himself, and equal rights in every political and economic capacity. My desire is for justice, for equality in all external matters. The life each man leads in thought and imagination, the home he builds and the tastes he cultivates are his concern alone. The state has no business to tamper with these.

Love of our fellow men is a phrase that sometimes irritates us, for it smacks of sentimentality as well as impossibility. How can I love every one as I love my friends? We find Christ's injunction that we love our neighbor as ourselves quite impracticable. The difficulty lies in the meaning we attach to love. We think of it as implying a desire to live intimately with the object of our affections. For poor, mediocre humanity, unable to see a spark of the divine in every human creature, to love every one is impos-

sible. But there is another interpretation of the word love which is quite permissible here. It may be translated as concern for our neighbor's welfare, a concern so great that we shall demand that justice be done him. This is a much more useful form of love than that which satisfies itself with a charity subscription, a gift of money or even a kind word and a smile. All these are palliatives only, and they are easy to give. Moreover, they are often debasing both to him who gives and to him who receives, producing self-righteousness in the one and obsequiousness in the other. But when I show my love for my neighbor by fighting for his rights as for my own, I lay him under no personal obligation. I work for the cause of justice, and in it he and I can give and receive without any sense of inequality. Love so interpreted is possible to any just man whatever his limitations of personal sympathy. Also it is a far more useful virtue, for it looks beyond the immediate need to an ultimate cure. It promises more permanent results than love which is mere unthinking affection and kindliness. Incidentally, these will come, too.

A socialist state organized on sensible lines promises more genuine freedom to the individual member of it than our present society gives. Am I really free, as I like to think? Far from it. I am bound by laws, moral codes and conventions. More than all these, I am the slave of our economic system. I must find a means of livelihood or my

family will starve. I am a slave to the fear of want, to the fear that I shall lose the decencies of life and the opportunities for pleasure, study and recreation which make life agreeable. I am the slave of these fears not only for myself but for those dependent upon me and for my friends. I shall suffer with them if they must ever forego these privileges. Were I assured that I should always enjoy what I now have, whether strong or ill, whether able to do my work or crippled, half the fear of life would be lifted from me. I should be free — not to do the things I shall never want to do in any case, to rob my neighbor or get more money than he has — but free to do my task, to contribute my share to the world's work, and in my leisure moments collect postage stamps, write poetry and learn to play golf or the violin. We must all pay our way somehow. Freedom is impossible to any one with a moral sense and a stomach to be filled. But who would care for freedom from these restrictions? They are welcome checks upon our liberty. If all our time were our own we should fear our use of it. The freedom of the next world may well appall us. We should go into training to prepare ourselves for it.

The citizens of the socialist state would, in like fashion, be trained for a better state and a freer society, that which I have described as the most ideal I can conceive. For as men learn to do right voluntarily and not from force, there will be less

and less need of formal laws and constitutions. As it is, most of the laws of our society impose no genuine restrictions upon us. We seldom wish to commit murder or arson. We should not do these things even were there no penalties attached. They do not meet our need of self-expression. Such laws are restrictions imposed upon the few, and exercise a very dubious restraint even upon them, for when a man really desires to kill another he usually is heedless of the consequences. Probably there are laws extant forbidding the utterance of blasphemy or the practice of witchcraft. They are obsolete, for no one knows how to do the thing forbidden. Would not a community trained to social service and sacrifice for the common good ultimately find all written laws superfluous? Would not self-sacrifice become ingrained, a part of the social conscience, a convention requiring no legal pressure for its enforcement? The translation of physical experience to spiritual knowledge, and of social obligation to individual choice, seems to me one of the most important truths life can teach us. For this reason I believe a socialist state the necessary prelude to the finer and freer state of anarchism.

I can imagine that many who have borne with me to this point and even felt some sympathy with these ideals will shake their heads and deny the practical value of such dreams. Innumerable objections can, of course, be brought; I can raise them as easily as any one. But difficulties equally

great are inherent in our present social muddle, and to all criticisms of an ideal society we can always retort, What would you substitute? Or would you prefer to shut your eyes and drift? Objectors to innovations have usually one ground of protest — they fear to leave a present certitude, even if admittedly bad, for an uncertain future which may be worse. Nor will they admit that change must inevitably be, whether premeditated or the result of unintelligent forces working in the dark. They either cling to the fatuous notion that society can remain as it is, or they assert that it will somehow improve of itself, without guidance. Rarely do they perceive that society is, after all, only an aggregation of individuals much like themselves, who must fashion their own destinies, both individual and social. Were this truth sufficiently brought home to them, every man would, perforce, devise some goal for his efforts, hard as the unwonted mental exercise might be. Practically, of course, every one has some sort of a goal, but it is usually only instinctive and unformulated, a vague desire; or if it is clearly defined it is frankly selfish and is not adequate for society as a whole. Let society go to the dogs, such a one implies; I shall insure myself against want and profit by the stupidity of others. Before men of this type can be made material for a better society, two things are necessary: they must develop some power to think in fields outside those of their immediate interests, and they must be so

desirous of seeing their neighbors as well off as themselves that they will make mental and material sacrifices to that end. The desire to find a way out is the force that leads to thought; emotions determine conduct. Once a man ardently desires a thing he will find a way to get it. A better society will come only when enough people desire a change so imperatively that they will think out a path through the practical difficulties and force their reluctant brothers to go with them.

I am not wedded to terminology nor to the letter of any system. Call socialism by another name or realize its ideals howsoever you can and I shall be content. But men quarrel with the term, or with the practical suggestions of the system, not believing at all in its impracticability, but secretly fearing its success and the consequent destruction of what they hold dear. Do you or do you not wish every man, woman and child to have enough to eat, agreeable work and the chance to know rest and the joys of life? If you really wish this you will try to bring it about. Perhaps there is only one way, perhaps there are a dozen. Their names may please or displease you, you may like or dislike their attendant consequences. But if you are honest, if you think and do not mouth catch-phrases in lieu of thinking, you will meet the question fairly. Then, if you prefer that some should go hungry that others may have too much, or that some should work long hours that others may have leisure, have the courage to say so.

Our social unrest breeds a class of hypocrites who profess altruistic ideals, but who at the same time denounce all reformers and men with radical ideas as unsettling and dangerous. The important thing is not whether you believe or disbelieve in this or that panacea or theory, but do you honestly believe in altruism, and are you willing to make some sacrifice that society may be the gainer?

The hostility which Christ excited in his day, and the distortions and evasions which have met his teachings ever since, arose from the instinctive recognition of the radical nature of his doctrine. Nobody need fear what he taught of God. But he went beyond theology and discussed society and the destruction of vested interests. At this all the innate selfishness of mankind arose in angry opposition. The social heresies of our day are accorded a like treatment. We summon all the selfishness of our natures in defense of what we have gained and hold. We cannot deny the seeming justice of the demand that the under dog be given a fair show. But we will not acquiesce in any practical step for fear that we shall be deprived of something dear to us. This is pure cowardice and selfishness.

One of the objections to socialism, though grounded on a misapprehension, has a more respectable basis and derives strength from a deep human instinct. It sees in the socialist state the dominance of system over the free wills of men, the substitution of machinery for what is human

though inefficient. Socialism need not destroy any of the good forces of human initiative, need not enslave us and make us less than men. The instinctive opposition to the replacement of individual will by social will in human institutions is due, however, to the unthinking fear of such enslavement. It is a fear which social thinkers will need to allay by the utmost concessions to individualism in all important matters. Socialism should content itself with solving the material problem of society. The realms of mind and spirit in which we most truly live are not its concern; save, indeed, as it gives us a more assured place in the material world and thus makes possible a deeper mental and spiritual life and truly enfranchises us.

The social revolution, if there is to be one — and this remains with us — must find its inspiration in religion. It is only in religion that the moral energy can be developed which is necessary to action. It is my experience that socialism of itself is inadequate to the task, this for the reason that it does not go to the root of human nature and show the relations of the individual to God and to his kind. In socialism alone there is insufficient animating force, for if life is a cul-de-sac, if there is no God and no eternal purpose, of what significance is our petty civilization or our effort to improve it? Let our little world perish or survive, as may chance, and each of us do as he likes and take as he can, for there is no moral law. But if

God strives to become, and if we wish to aid him, we must force ourselves to act in harmony with him and to use our intelligence to realize his dream. If we can believe this, the ideal of socialism or some other Utopian scheme becomes at once a practical necessity to progress. We have an imperative need to test it out and to reject, accept or improve it. Will the necessary renascence of religious emotion come? Who can say? Perhaps it is already upon us, for there are not lacking signs of it. We can safely believe that the world cannot persist without some faith sufficiently strong to animate conduct and give value to existence. We are sick for faith now, and blindly seeking it. If we would hasten its coming we can individually try to realize it by our own mental efforts. It is born of collective thought and desire. With this faith, of which there are already signs in the thought and activity of the world, we shall have sufficient spiritual power to attempt the difficult task of reorganizing society and bringing it into harmony with our recent scientific and economic knowledge, and with our finer individual and collective ideals

CHAPTER XII

THE PLACE OF LITERATURE

The chapters of this book have grown from the need which I have felt of determining my exact ideas on fundamental questions. Composition and statement is a great clarifier. That which was obscure becomes definite as the writer seeks to phrase his half-meanings in precise terms; and in the tardy definiteness which emerges like the grain of a rare wood under the polisher's cloth, he is amazed to find opinions and beliefs of which he was never before aware. These come to the surface of consciousness from depths he did not know existed. The gaps which he half suspected prove not so formidable as he feared and gradually disappear as he slowly shapes his thoughts into a systematic and consistent whole. I believe it was Holmes who said: "I write to find out what I think." It is a true saying, though the process of transformation remains always mysterious. In the writing of this book I have been prompted in part by this desire to know what I think, and to arrange my ideas in some systematic and orderly way. But there was also a more immediate and practical end.

THE AMATEUR PHILOSOPHER

For some time I have cherished a modest ambition to write a book of literary criticism, or at any rate to collect and develop ideas upon the subject. A necessary first step to this was to find out what I already knew and thought, so that I could approach the extensive reading demanded in an intelligent fashion. At once the gaps in my general knowledge of the subject and the apparent diversity and disharmony of the theories I held made the establishment of a basis for critical opinions a primary need. I had, that is, to find out what were my ideas of life and the universe before I could determine my ideas about literature! It is astonishing how soon any subject, if faithfully pursued, leads to the fundamentals of philosophy, and if we wish to be intellectually thorough we cannot avoid the task of considering them. However weak and inadequate our ideas may be, we must pursue them to the end with all their ramifications and implications. We have to examine our axiomatic assumptions, those which are the cornerstones of our beliefs, and try to find out why they meet our needs better than others no more difficult to justify logically. Then, when we have tested the foundations and selected our guiding ideas, we have to consider the objections which the system of thought reared upon the basis selected inevitably provokes. Thus it is that I find I cannot explain satisfactorily the purpose and methods of literary art until I have devised a theory explaining in some fashion the purpose and

methods of life. My explanations are probably unsatisfactory to every one but myself; yet, however inadequate, they have at least the merit of consistency in so far as a conscious effort has been able to achieve it.

The principles of literary structure, the relation of literature to the other arts, and the relation of art to life and conduct are far too great a theme to be developed adequately in this place. I hope some time to attempt so ambitious a subject on the scale it demands. Here I wish only to enumerate some of the questions of which the solution seems imperative to literary theory, and to give in outline the tentative answers at which I have arrived. Perhaps in so doing I can at least show the necessity of a philosophic basis for any thorough system of criticism.

To begin, we may consider the resemblances of the artist's methods to those of nature herself. Assume life to be a unified whole, dominated by an inclusive consciousness which we call God. Presumably he works through us and through all life, and man's instinct to create is only a part of the divine desire to develop new and richer forms of life. It would not be too much to say, on this assumption, that the fruits of the creative instincts in man are indirectly the product of God. If this were so, philosophers might reasonably examine the methods of creative genius, seeking in them a knowledge of the ways of God, who moulds in life much as men manipulate words and

paint. The aim of the creative artist — richness, vitality, simplicity, clearness, the elimination of waste — may also then be the aims of God in the individual and in society. Figuratively, we often speak of God as the master artist. Let us take the figure to be literally true and interpret his purposes as we discover by self-analysis the aim of the creative instinct in man and the technic or means whereby this instinct expresses itself. Nor is help lacking if we approach the problem from the other end. If from our efforts to devise a philosophy we have arrived at certain conclusions as to the nature and the purpose of life, we can reasonably assume that it is the object of art — itself the product of the creative instinct — to imitate God's purposes and to make use of his methods in so far as these are discoverable and their adequacy to human expression approved. In such a circle of reasoning we assume, what I have endeavored to justify, that life is a unity expressing in its parts the true nature of the whole; also that it is experimental in its nature, endeavoring, while asserting its unity, to express itself in forms ever richer, more intense and varied.

It is no long step from such a conception of the aims of life and literature to a definition of beauty which may be both serviceable and intelligible; beauty in living forms is an adaptation of bodily structure to a preconceived ideal, and this effected with the utmost freedom from secondary or conflicting purposes, and resulting in a creature which

is highly vital. In art, analogously, beauty consists in the adaptation of materials to a clearly perceived end, accompanied by the least apparent expenditure of effort commensurate with the result, and productive in the finished work not of life, but of something vigorously suggestive of life — a reflex of life. Apparently, though the point is debatable, this difference must be emphasized: Art, for all its resemblance to life, is not life itself, for it is not self-perpetuating; it offers a model only, which life, personified in another artist, may imitate. In illustration of our definition, we find the human body beautiful when it accomplishes most efficiently the work set it by life, physical and mental activity, vitality or intensity of feeling, and the power to perpetuate itself. Beauty must be a relative term in any application we may make of it, implying a comparison of the more efficient form to one less efficient. But we employ the term most conveniently as an expression of fitness of means to end which surpasses the average fitness of similar forms. It connotes something out of the ordinary. In literature, that work will be beautiful which selects its themes from the vital and enduring forces of life, expresses them with economy of means and produces vigorous results; results, that is, endowed with the suggestion of vitality.

It is inevitable, then, if our definition is to include both purpose and the ways in which purpose is realized, that in the analysis of any work of art

we draw a distinction between form and content. There is an element of falsity in such a division, a falsity inherent, however, in all analysis, in which a unified whole is for the sake of intelligibility broken into its constituent parts. The tests we apply both to content and method will, however, be essentially the same, and will be virtually those which we employ in our efforts to determine the purpose of nature and the means by which that purpose is realized.

First as to the content of literature. No theme can, it would seem, be foreign to literature if existing in life or imagined by the human mind, which is itself a part of life. We cannot assume that this or another theme is inadmissible if it can be found in life itself. Yet of the innumerable themes which life offers some are apparently more important than others. In life some of the issues are so vital that life itself is dependent on their correct determination. Such have to do with fundamental questions of conduct, which, if rightly decided, make for life and vigor, but which, if decided wrongly, are the cause of death or of weakened vigor and consequent unhappiness. Ethical themes, having to do with the vital problems of conduct, would seem, then, to be of greater literary importance — as they are of greater importance in life itself — than all others. They come home more closely to us, for they reflect the concern which they cause us in the difficult business of living. Second only to these themes, and in part

indistinguishable from them, are those which reinforce life, which waken us to the joy of existence and help us live more intensely. The purpose of these themes in literature is not primarily to aid us in moral judgments, but to give us pleasure and enhanced vigor; though as beauty is essential to all art, and beauty gives us joy, we find enjoyment as well as instruction in the artistic treatment of ethical themes, also.

There seems, however, despite this correspondence due to the presence of beauty in both, some difference in aim. In our literary themes based upon moral issues in the vital relations of life, our chief desire is to present the difficulty in such a clear light that in the next real conflict of similar forces we may be better able to choose wisely; the aim of literature here is primarily edifying. In the treatment of themes designed to make the realization of life more intense and poignant, our desire is not guidance, but stimulation to a keener participation in whatever experiences life may bring. If it were not that conduct is the very essence of life, it would be unwise to say that one or the other of these two is the more important, for if life is worth living it must justify itself by the relish it imparts. In literature, therefore, it is sometimes difficult to make a preference and assign the higher place. *Hamlet* makes us think upon moral questions and stirs both pain and joy. The *Midsummer Night's Dream* makes us think hardly at all, but it gives us pleasure

and a quickened sense of the beauty of life. Both themes are worthy of a great writer. Yet if I assign *Hamlet* the higher place I am in accord with my intuitive judgment and with that of the world.

In this conception of literature is no place accorded that which is essentially a withdrawal from life. Great literature cannot exist for itself, cannot divest itself of moral obligation. Even in painting, an art in which the expression of an abstract idea is next to impossible, it is difficult to divorce æsthetic considerations from ethical. Ruskin's theories may be extreme, but nevertheless it seems true that ethical significance in the broadest sense should accompany æsthetic worth in the selection and treatment of material. The necessity is more apparent in literature. Worthy literature cannot withdraw from nor contradict life. Yet literature is an art, also; it is more than a code of ethics put into the form of concrete instances. Though it selects from life themes of the greatest significance to conduct and shows the importance of its judgments to our daily acts, it seeks also to make the portrayal of these themes beautiful by accomplishing its purpose swiftly and attaining a just emphasis by eliminating everything irrelevant. In so far as it does this and arouses pleasure by reason of its deftness, literature is also an art.

Life is a welter of forces, has seemingly a great number of purposes, some of them contradictory and mutually incompatible. Literature seeks to determine which of life's ends are the most impor-

tant, which lead most surely to a heightened vitality. It relegates to the background the irrelevant and accidental things, the by-products of life's complex growth, its hesitations and contradictions, its occasional uncertainty of intent. It seeks to discover the creative purpose of life, and by making it clear aid in its attainment. We conceive of God as working with the forms of life and seeking by experiment to overcome his recalcitrant materials and shape them to more flexible and vital forms in living creatures. Intelligence in man has evolved as a means whereby man can aid directly in this process. Man, therefore, seeks to find amid the many forces of life those which are the most significant, those, that is, which give promise of the best results if followed to the neglect of minor or hampering forces. He seeks in literature to make these forces clear to his understanding; sets himself ideals to aid in overcoming difficulties in the selection of the important and the subjugation of the unimportant. He endeavors to avoid blind alleys, all fruitless effort, and unnecessary pain and failure. He husbands his strength for what is permanent rather than wasting it upon the transitory. In his literature he is able to solve his problems in a more detached and less hurried fashion than in the conduct of life itself, for in life immediate action is imperative; there is little time to pause and reflect. The deed must follow at once upon the impulse or the enterprise of pith and moment comes to nothing.

The mind trained to the contemplation of moral problems by a consideration of literary examples is better prepared to act wisely than that which has never reflected, has not considered conduct in detached and typical instances amid simplified surroundings. Literature holds up ideals whereby the creative process is facilitated. As a child prepares for the duties of life by the mimic activities of play, so mature human beings prepare for life by a contemplation of the mimic activities of literature. As we establish an ideal and approve its imagined realization, we prepare for its actual realization in conduct. It is a convenient means of training, facilitating the creative purpose of life in the attainment of its ends. Already we have learned to modify the forms of animal and plant life so that they may better serve our purposes. In literature we seek by the establishment of models for our imitation to work similar changes in ourselves. Incidentally we accomplish a second purpose; we enhance the joy of life and taste it with greater gusto, much as animals rejoice in life by an excess of bodily activity. The parallels of art and life, of man and God, seem closer and more illuminating the more we examine them.

A study of the relation of literature to life, and the interpretation of God by analogy to the creative artist and his aims and methods, suggests the nature of the satisfaction which the life force may enjoy in the contemplation of its creations. Life, when portrayed in art, is often, curiously enough,

more poignant to the observer than are deed and sensation, desire and emotion, as experienced in "real" life. It is possible for some natures to be more deeply stirred by a tragedy of Shakespeare's than by the tragedies of every-day life, with their inartistic medley of the heroic and the mean. May not the creative principle, the life force, likewise find its greatest pleasure, its most poignant being, in the product of its creative effort, in something external to itself, though truly also a part of it? We cannot conceive of life in the abstract, nor a God detached from his creations. These creations make God real to us. Perhaps, likewise, they make God real to himself. As he surveys the form into which he has poured his being, God may not only grow in clarity of purpose, but may also live more vividly. Therefore God's quenchless thirst for creation, and man's. Only as we project ourselves and view the works of our brains and hands do we taste to the full the racy tang of being. So, God may tremble with delight at the birth of a child or the development of a new species.

In this conception of literature in its relation to life, not only subject-matter but form, or technic, has an important place. God, thought of as an artist with limited forces at his disposal and difficulties in the nature of things to overcome, should find pleasure in the technic of creation. Like any other artist, he must experiment with his tools and acquire a mastery of them. Many

of the forms of life, if not, indeed, the entire kingdom of created things, may be regarded as exercises — sketches for more careful compositions to follow, or scales to make the fingers deft. The extinct species of life which came to an end because they could evolve no farther are curiously analogous to the early efforts of an artist or writer who is seeking to find himself and establish a style. If these experiments in animate forms were essential to the creation of the more complex species later achieved, we may look with a new respect upon the efforts of the human artist to master his medium. These are valuable not only to him but to all other artists, whose conceptions of the possibilities of their craft may thereby be enlarged. One picture painted in a new manner, one poem written in a new form, whether completely successful or not, is an enlargement of the possibilities of art and makes possible successes unknown before. It is largely through such an enlargement of art's technical resources that anything new is possible at all. There is, then, no art for art's sake, if we mean thereby that technical efficiency can be an end in itself. Technical efficiency may be sought for the pleasure it gives, but its justification lies, none the less, in its employment for the setting forth with a fresh effectiveness of the vital problems of conduct or increasing our sense of the beauty and value of life. Not always does the innovator do this more important work himself. A greater man than he,

one who can combine technical mastery with vitality of subject-matter, will profit, however, and the experiment in form will thus be justified.

The literary critic who damns an experiment in verse or prose because it does not display the merits of accepted masterpieces is short-sighted if, in so doing, he ignores a possible enlargement of technic and a gain in craftsmanship. This may be of less immediate value than a contribution to the literature elucidating human conduct, but its potential value is immense. A greater writer may find in this experimental failure the very tool he needs. Yet all innovations in method are denounced by those professedly jealous for the honor of literature. Hostility springs naturally enough from the fear that the high aims of literature will be forgotten and that form will become an end in itself. It is a needless fear. Both life and art are persistent and enduring. They are not brought to an end by the half-success of a dinosaur or the failure of a grand opera. Also, the dinosaur and grand opera are amusing if not enlightening, and we should not take them too seriously when we judge them.

Critical hostility to innovation is incidental to a retrospective philosophy. If you believe that all the ideals possible to human thought have been formulated, that all the great ideas are to be found in classical literature, and that all the supreme geniuses are dead, never to be reincarnated, then you will denounce the Ibsens, the Zolas, the

Kiplings and the Masefields when they say something you do not like in a form that is new to you. If, however, you believe that all life is an experiment, that it never ceases becoming something other than it is, then you will believe that the means of its expression will grow, too, and you will welcome every attempt at a new form of utterance. The complacent hostility of criticism to the innovator learns nothing from history. Every period of literature reflects the contentment of criticism with the best that has been created up to that time, and its conviction that no material changes of attitude or method can ever be effected. The creative artists are not so easily pleased. They endeavor always to do something new, and the history of literature is the record of their successes and failures.

The history of thought and literature in its recurrent cycles of rationalism and mysticism, of doubt and faith, of classicism and romanticism, should lead us to anticipate the next inevitable swing of the pendulum to the other extreme of the arc. Our age, now growing away from the scientific materialism of the last generation, reaffirms a faith in intuitions, its belief in mysteries insoluble to our present knowledge. The change has been as inevitable as growth itself. This age will as certainly be succeeded by another wave of rationalism, wherein the reason will arrange and systematize the discoveries made by the exploring spirits of our time, and when it has pushed its

boundaries until they can be enlarged no farther, will again turn for fresh inspiration to the emotional life and the guidance of intuition. Yet if truth is only relative, as such a philosophy would lead us to believe, if thought is only a current between the poles of rationalism and mysticism, if literature vacillates eternally between classicism and romanticism, why should we concern ourselves with what is forever mutable and incomplete?

The answer is that no new movement, however like its kinsman of another age, is identical with it. The scientific determinism of the nineteenth century is not the rationalism of the age of Voltaire, nor is Bergson a neo-Platonist. The thought of our age profits by the thought of all preceding ages and, despite similarities, is never to be confused with it. So, too, the romantic literature of our day is not the literature of Byron and Scott. It derives from them, but also from those who preceded and followed them, and it adds something of its own, an element slight, it may be, but sufficient to alter the compound to something never before seen. The more rapidly our age changes to a new, altering its beliefs with each accession of human experience, the richer will be its life and thought and the literature expressive of them. But most of us are afraid of the inevitable future and retard it as much as we can by clinging inveterately to what is familiar. We should be wiser to welcome the unfamiliar, realizing that life and vitality are synonymous with

growth and change, and that the more intensely we live the less certain we become that we have grasped all the truth in the world. It is hard to believe that truth itself must grow like every other living thing, but it is a conclusion that is forced upon us. Perhaps we can derive consolation from the thought that at the core of change lies something unchangeable, even if it is nothing more than the necessity of change, though it is probably much more than this. Then as we turn timidly to the new we may find in it something familiar, and so welcome it.

Doubtless all literature is largely imitative and repetitive, the contributions of a single generation to the sum of truth being slight. Human nature of to-day is very like that of ancient Athens, and the great Greek tragedies, when rightly understood, as true as ever they were. Yet there is some change in attitude, a difference in emphasis, if nothing more. And there is a still greater difference in background, institutions, religion and social ideals. Hence the difficulty in translating the civilization of the Greeks into terms which are vital to us, and the necessity of rephrasing old truths in the idiom of to-day. A genuine understanding of ancient literature and the life it reflects is possible only to students or to persons of large imagination. Herein lies our need of a new literature which will restate the old truths. But this is more imperative if we regard literature not only as a source of truth and inspiration, but also

as an exercise of the creative faculty, whose virtue lies more in expression than in appreciation. An age merely appreciative is dull and unprogressive. Life is shown in creative activity. When this is languid the age lacks force and makes but little progress on the road of life. We should do what we can to encourage literary and artistic effort, so that we may gain thereby in vigor, even if need be at the cost of cultural appreciation. It would be better that we produced a copious and varied literature, even of an inferior quality, than that we should produce but little and rely for our inspiration upon the literature of the past. Yet to encourage literary expression will inevitably lead to the production of some works of the first importance. I do not think so meanly of our time as those who prate constantly of its mediocrity. Amid much poor and indifferent work there is some that succeeding times may think to be excellent. It is more difficult for us to evaluate it than it will be for our grandchildren. The reader of the next century, deploring the barrenness of his age, will probably look to our time as one of great vigor and productivity. Those who see the golden age always in the past are familiar figures. They are the non-creative members of society, the confirmed conservatives. The creative mind, stimulated by the eternal freshness and variety of life, desires to express life anew, more for self-satisfaction and to answer a natural need than for any other reason.

The subject-matter of literature grows with the centuries and the increasing complexity of social institutions. Perhaps few literary products of our day approach in quality the masterpieces of the past; but the latter are sifted from a great mass of literature, the rest of which has been forgotten. In any case our range is greater. It is absurd to think that all possible themes have been exploited. Life creates new themes as it goes, modifications of the old, perhaps, but different, too, as the modern horse differs from his four-toed ancestor. The *Antigone* of Sophocles, great as is its problem, the conflict of opposed duties, that to the state and to religion, is not put in terms easily intelligible to us of to-day. The modern parallel would be the conflict in the mind of a reformer torn between his duty to God — his allegiance to an ideal, that is — and his duty to his fellow men. If he tears down social institutions even to build them better, he inevitably injures his fellows, just as the invention of the power-loom worked a hardship to the hand-weavers. The conflict here is in terms which have a vital meaning for us of to-day. They are new, though the theme may be essentially that of Sophocles. And because the terms are new the problem is new — new to us who have to find a solution for it — and the literature of our day must present both theme and solution in a fashion suited to our comprehension. The average man needing guidance will not find it in the Greek drama. The background and the forms

of an ancient civilization have little meaning to him, and even at the cost of much study can never seem so real as the literature of his own time, with its portrayal of conflicts common to the life he lives.

I sometimes wonder if we should not be wise to create the literature of the world anew in every generation, storing the old in museums. It is more important that we learn from action, that we express the creative force within us, than that we seek to relive the past. This we can never do truthfully in any case. But we may learn to live more vitally, we may hasten a better day by taking thought and acting upon it. And if the new age should forget us, is it not our creation none the less if we have made it possible? We are the parents of the future as truly as we are inheritors of the past. We must make a positive advance; in literature we must set forth our difficulties and solve them in so far as we can. The dead past is more often a clog upon us than a means to progress. Those who think the best achievements of mankind are to be found in the past hope only to keep the world from slipping back. They are doubters of the possibilities of life, sceptical of the creative energy of a God dissatisfied with the life he has made and capable of bettering it. Belief in an evolving world and an evolving God demands the forward, not the backward look. It is, of course, a question largely of emphasis. We learn something by a study of the world's suc-

cesses and mistakes, but more often we do not learn in proportion to the effort expended.

That the chief end of life is a realization of self is a truism and, therefore, important. If this realization means the strengthening of the creative powers, then the importance of individual efforts in the arts becomes apparent. Development of appreciation and understanding is not enough, any more than a theory of conduct is valuable if divorced from action. A man's function is to do, to think to an end, to create. Observation, study, analysis, development of the powers of discrimination are each important. But it is more important that he should live. In literature and art this means he should endeavor to create something, set himself concrete ideals of conduct and beauty which are the enlarged shadow of himself, the measure of his possible stature, which in the effort to attain he inevitably approaches. The practice of an art is the actual exercise of powers. Its study is like the theory of a game, valuable, but only so as tested by actual participation in the game. A healthy society is one in which every one plays games, not one in which eighteen men play baseball and thirty thousand barren spectators look on. The healthy state of art is one in which everybody is a bit of an amateur, and not that in which a few professionals attain a superlative excellence. We hear much of the art-loving Japanese. Apparently the writing of verse or participation in the arts-crafts is almost universal

among them. It argues a wholesome condition of affairs. The President of the United States, emulating the Mikado, would do well to compose fewer messages to Congress and more poetry. He need not publish his verses, nor need any writer, unless convinced of their value to others. Artistic effort is primarily an individual matter; it benefits him who attempts it. Through it he strengthens his powers for the active pursuits of life.

Consider this theory in its relation to the education of the young. Our practice is to lay before untrained minds the masterpieces of literature, the expressions of profound experience quite beyond their comprehension. These are meaningless except to youths of unusual imaginative power who can enter sympathetically into experiences beyond their years. The common result is a distaste for literature. Almost nothing is done save in the early years of childhood and in a few schools to foster the creative powers of the pupil. Were young people encouraged to express themselves freely, however crudely, in dancing, drawing, and the writing of verse, they would grow in the power to live vigorously. Incidentally, they would make greater gains than they do in the power to appreciate similar activities in others. Observe writers and artists for proof that creation and appreciation go hand in hand.

The best criticism of art is the shop-talk of artists. The best appreciation of poetry is to be found among the poets. Those who have prac-

tised an art and learned by experience to understand the artistic impulse and the problems of its expression can best evaluate success or failure. It is true in life, also; the most illuminating comments on existence come from those who have lived most profoundly. In art, among our most valued criticisms are those of Joshua Reynolds, Rodin, Whistler and Alfred East. Some of our best literary comment is that of Lessing, Addison, Poe, Stevenson and Henry James — to mention only a few well-known names. And these are of the limited number who have recorded their opinions. Glimpses of the talk of artists and writers, notably Doctor Johnson and Coleridge, show the same close relation of critical and creative power. It is natural that the two should go together, for they are complementary. But power of expression rarely springs from study, save as the analysis of models follows upon the attempt to express. I once knew a man who decried the practice of literary composition as unprofitable for the beginner. He intended to study the masterpieces of literature and then proceed to add to their number. He will never do so. The need of expression is a need of life. The man who tries to tell his thoughts and dreams discovers soon his restricted knowledge of form and turns to the study of models. Analysis and expression go hand in hand, and the desire to pull to pieces follows the desire to create. Our educational practice and our common theory of the arts takes hold of the

matter at the wrong end. It does this because it fails to see that expression in art and literature is a primary and universal need, and not merely the recreation of our leisure moments and a pleasing adornment of life. Practice in art is preparation in life, or should be. Indeed, it is life itself, for it exercises the vital forces which find more direct expression in conduct.

I wish to discuss only two technical questions in this outline of literary criticism in its relation to philosophy: the nature of tragedy and the meaning of poetic justice. The theories defined should, of course, be reinforced by an examination of a greater number of specific instances than is possible in this place. I shall have to be content with a general statement and one or two typical cases in point.

Tragedy, if regarded in the light of our previous discussion, will be more than a form of literary recreation designed only to increase our enjoyment of life. It will have a deeper purpose, reaching to the roots of experience, and its creation will be an instance of the creative impulse in life. Wherein lies the tragedy of life, and what are the literary expressions of it? What practical end do these serve? I find two types of tragedy: one, the tragedy lying in the clash of ideals of conduct with the circumstances of actuality; the other the tragedy inherent in the decay of the human soul, the weakening of its vital principle. Let us briefly examine both.

The force of life, which seeks to express itself in fresh and vital forms, is confronted by difficulties both in the development of the individual and in the development of the race. Matter is obdurate. Apparently it is not easy to make a man out of the dust of the earth. The process has required æons, and the path of progress is strewn with the debris of the inadequate forms that perished because life, through them, attained something better, or because in them life followed a false lead ending in a cul-de-sac, and so was forced to retrace its steps and cast about for a new opening. A similar process is evidenced in the growth of the individual who has, to be sure, the benefit of precept and example, but who can profit from these only when a point of conflict is reached, and then at the cost of pain. Effort is painful, and all growth involves effort. Tragedy, great or less, is inherent in every obstacle overcome in the upward climb. Sometimes the obstacle is too great to be overcome, and the right choice in conduct involves a sacrifice so great that even death may ensue. This is the type of tragedy set forth in the drama of fate. Antigone has the choice of two actions, either of which involves the destruction of self. She may obey the equally importunate demands of religion and the state. She chooses to follow her deeper instinct and obeys religion rather than society. In so doing she solves a difficult problem of conduct, selecting one from a conflict of choices as in the lesser affairs of

life. Though like them, this is of greater moment, and its consequences are immediate and fatal.

What purpose is served by this literary expression of a tragic circumstance typical of human life? Does it do more than sharpen our sympathies for those of whom such exacting decisions are required, more than arouse self-pity for the lesser tragedies of our own experience? I think it does, for it helps us to a clearer understanding of moral problems. Out of the chaos of conflicting purposes and desires, little and great, emerge the supreme ends of life, and from the two clearly set before us in this instance we are led to see the more important. To keep true to one's inner conviction is more essential than to show obedience to the state, important as the latter is. It is the more important because in the adherence to our highest ideals lies the preservation of the soul's integrity. This is a man's most important duty, to keep his soul alive and healthy, even at the cost of death or defiance of the laws of men. That the alternative to the choice involving death is often security and worldly ease does not make obedience to the deepest intuition less imperative. The deaths of martyrs in all causes bear witness to the truth of this. Many a man has gone cheerfully to the stake for the faith in him rather than live in honor and ease as an apostate. The soul's life is more important than our physical existence. The drama which brings out this truth and

strengthens our allegiance to a deep intuition does something to aid us to choose wisely in the conflicts which come to us. The tragedy of Antigone is heroic tragedy; it arouses our admiration for its central figure. It does not depress but strengthens us, warming us to a glow of emulation.

Tragedy of the second type portrays the results consequent upon a wrong choice and the denial of conscience. In the Antigone we cannot see beyond the death of the heroine; we do not know certainly that her spirit enters a new form of life strengthened by her wise choice in this. We must have faith in her compensation or, disbelieving in any hereafter, still think it our first duty to adhere to the highest ideal within us. When, however, the baser alternative is chosen, when cowardice and selfishness lead to a denial of the soul's best admonitions, then it is we see in the decay of the human spirit the consequences of evil. Physical death may or may not come of the surrender. This is of minor concern. The weakening of the soul, its slow disintegration and approach to the inanimate matter from which it sprang — these are visible to us and constitute the most tragic spectacle of life. In Macbeth we see the inverse of the creative process. Macbeth retraces the steps of his development from the brute. His path is that of annihilation, and the tragedy of such a spectacle moves us to deeper pity and terror than any other tragic theme in the world. Macbeth chooses the course of inev-

itable death, true death, which is the destruction of the soul. His acts are a denial of life, the greatest blasphemy we can express either in word or deed.

The two types of tragedy are closely akin. In heroic tragedy we applaud the wise choice in conduct, even though death ensues. In the tragedy of moral weakness we observe in the disintegration of character the consequences of a wrong decision. There need be no controversy upon the relative merits of the two as art forms. Both, though in different ways, teach the all-importance of morality. Both are guides to conduct and aid in the creative process of life, for they hold the mirror up to nature that men may read more clearly. But though their purpose is chiefly moral, they give pleasure also, exhibiting in their fine adaptation of means to end and freedom from irrelevancy the creative activity of man working at its best.

Our desire when we read dramas or stories that poetic justice be dealt is indicative of something more profound than a childish pleasure in a happy ending. The two are often at odds. In conventional literature the wicked come to a bad end and the good are rewarded with the material pleasures of life to a degree surpassing their deserts. In more artistic writing the doer of good does not necessarily reap his reward in pleasures and riches, nor the wicked person suffer in health or pocket; the right action is rewarded by a height-

ened capacity for good — either described or implied — and the wrong by a dulling of the sensibilities to the finer opportunities of the soul. That reward and punishment in this sense should spring directly from action is expressive of the desire that moral causes should produce results commensurate with them. This derives from our logical desire to interpret moral life in the same fashion that we interpret the world of physical causation. Therefore, in the artistic portrayal of the moral world the chain of cause and effect is directly operative, the good deed begetting consequences for good, the evil those for evil.

There is, however, a conflict here between the observed facts of life and the realm of spirit. In life the good man is not always rewarded nor the wicked punished — at least in so far as we can determine ultimate rewards and punishments. Therefore literature seeks, as I have said, to make rewards and punishments spiritual rather than material, by transferring to the spiritual realm the logic of experience as taught by the law of causation in the physical universe. In this it seeks to do more clearly and consciously what a simpler literature uncertainly symbolizes by rewarding the hero with the love of the heroine, and the villain with disgrace and pain. It seeks a justice which our world seems not wholly to grant. In so doing it seeks to improve upon life, a desire which may be explained from two slightly different points of view.

The first explanation for this introduction into

the spiritual realm of a justice fashioned upon a belief in causation is that the mind seeks to bring out of the chaos of life a simple, universal and dominant principle. It endeavors to harmonize the ideal and the actual which seem in life discordant. In the spiritual realm it assumes a justice not wholly realized in the world of men, one offering compensation for the undeserved hardships of life. In translating the spiritual consequences of conduct into material terms, or in contenting itself with laying bare these consequences without realizing them in material terms, it serves its end of making life more rational than it seems. Conduct, freed from all obscurities and irrelevancies, assumes the high place we intuitively assign it, and our belief in moral law is thus strengthened. Literature fortifies us by doing this. Like all art, it simplifies and clarifies the materials with which it works, these being in this instance human ideals, intuitions and beliefs.

But we may look at this clarifying process from a slightly different point of view, one more in harmony with our philosophy of an imperfect and evolving universe. Suppose the demand for justice not a recognition of a truth half hidden amid the distracting realities of life, but only an ideal which we impose upon the world, and to which we endeavor to make life conform. The idealist seeks in the imagined world of art and literature a refuge from the world of reality. In so doing, however, he actually imposes an ideal more or less compelling upon life itself. He fashions life as he

thinks it should be, moral excellence generating moral power, even though barren of any material reward. He predicts the day when moral ideals will actually rule the material world, as well as the spiritual world of his creation. His ideal world, as represented in literature, is more than an illusion or dream, for it is a pattern with some power, by reason of its appeal to the imaginations of men, to make the actual world alter in conformity to it. The human mind, then, imposes an ideal upon reality or breathes spirit into the lifeless mechanism of existence with intent to transform it.

Fundamentally, this endeavor to impose a moral law upon a world which has it not may be essentially that which tries to bring out what already exists, but which is obscured by the complexities of an existence which is half spiritual and half material. The ideal which literature attempts to express is the best we know, but in life is not clearly formulated, is only half grasped. By bringing this obscure ideal to light and realizing it in hypothetical instances literature both discovers and creates it. Every creation is but a discovery of what is latent, and yet the created thing cannot be said to exist, to be real, until it is set apart, made definite and specific. The desire to create and grow is a half-blind force. Its only purpose is to realize itself — how, it cannot clearly perceive. But when any act of creation has been completed we observe that the result sprang inevitably from the creative intent and is truly

its consequence. But the force was not at the outset clearly conscious of its ideal. It worked experimentally in a half-light until its creation was before it. This it can surpass, working into ever greater definiteness, much as the dramatist works whose creations grow in reality before his eyes. The moral law, then, is the product of life's clearing vision. It is not yet perfectly formulated. In its formulation we have a part, and the literary expression of the ideal is a means to this end. Our poetic justice is an instance of the ideal we have set and are seeking to impose upon life. We endeavor to lead the universe out of its experimental twilight into a world with a clearer vision of its possibilities and desires.

When we give literature so great a place as this, are we not endowing it with powers transcending its sphere? Probably we are if we suppose the stellar universe can be moulded to conformity with the books we write. But for that part of the universe which most concerns us, the realm of human conduct, literature may really possess this potentiality. On a vaster scale the creative force back of all life may likewise grow to clearer purpose as it establishes ideals and then attains and surpasses them. A study of the creative force in man and the way in which its ideals grow in power and definiteness may then be one of the roads leading to an understanding of God and the universe. Literature may be one of the means by which God and the universe grow.

CHAPTER XIII

CONCLUSION

Is not the man who devises an idealistic philosophy blind to the realities of the world? The thought haunts us as we endeavor to gather our ideas and relate them in some logical fashion. It must come to every one at times. To be without doubts and moments of utter despair in this world of ours argues dull sympathies and a mind wilfully obtuse. We would wish to be regardful of the pain of life, its squalor, meanness and despair. And yet these themes for pessimism seem relatively trivial when we endeavor to view life with any wholeness. That they are of the lesser things is revealed to us when we have most cause to despair. It is then that the force of life asserts itself and pessimism seems an affectation, a disease of idle minds and those who do not feel deeply. I know it is not always that; life is sometimes too hard for any but the strongest natures. Christ, even, wavers in his faith at times, and these moments bring him closer to us than all others, for in them he seems most human, a man as other men, though better, with a finer vision and a deeper sense of eternal things.

In the mixed comedy and tragedy of life, in its happiness and pain, the deepest experiences are precursors of a more vital faith in life's essential excellence. After the most bitter moment we look thankfully back to it, prizing what it has brought us as worth the cost. This is true at least of those who have known deep emotional experiences. They must ever remain the marvel of those who stand upon the verge of life and have not tasted the sweet and bitter waters of its springs. Pessimism is usually a mood of youth, or a pose propitious to a literary melancholy. Doctor Johnson we often think of as a pessimist, but he was hardly that, though his mind was of a sombre cast. He met life bravely, was convinced of the worth of human honesty and tried to live true to the spiritual faith within him; at the last he found death not so hard as he had feared. With more cause for pessimism than Byron, he was more courageous, more human, more genuine. Byron, with his morbid pleasure in melancholy and despair — the product of his own deliberate acts — is the type of pessimist. He seems to me typical of the worst that pessimism can bring; that his pessimism was the consequence of his own acts is none the less tragic and a cause of pity, but it invalidates it as a criticism of life.

I have tried in the chapters of this book to rehearse the conditions of my life and thought that led me first to unbelief and scepticism, and later to a belief of my own. I have thought my

experiences typical of the time, with its destruction of old beliefs and its efforts to replace them with new. Therefore, the seeming egotism of this narrative does not prevent me from making it public. In so far as it is typical of the changing beliefs of the average man it has value, for what has proved helpful to me may likewise be helpful to others. One need not think his ideas revolutionary to hope so much as this.

My ideas are, of course, a texture wrought of the substance of my time. Any one of them and all of them can be traced to their sources. If I have displayed any originality it is in the emphasis which I assign them in their relations one to another. Whether this originality be great or small does not concern me greatly, though any one is gratified if his thoughts seem sufficiently original to command the attention of his fellows. He thinks then that he has labored to some end other than his own pleasure, and to the joy of self-realization is added that of altruism.

I should like in this concluding chapter to restate briefly what seem to me the most important ideas I have elaborated in previous chapters, thus emphasizing those points most vital in the conduct of life. Two or three fundamental principles run through all my discussion, and it is upon the acceptance or rejection of these that the worth of my "system," if I can call it such, depends.

First, let me hasten to acknowledge what has been implied throughout, that what I have formu-

lated does not go to the root of existence. God and the vital principle of life, as I have endeavored to define them, do not explain existence completely. I cannot conceive how matter is born of nothingness, nor can I tell how life first seized upon inanimate matter and made use of it for its purposes. But these difficulties are inherent in the constitution of the human intellect. They are in the nature of the mental life and must ever remain insurmountable difficulties in the way of a complete understanding of life. They are in the realms of the unknowable. It is as though the universe were a hollow sphere and we within it. What lies beyond its confines we cannot know, and our guesses inevitably lead us into paradox. But within the limitations of our experience and the human mould of our minds we must devise the best explanations that we can, must endeavor to conceive of God and the chief ends of man, must determine the importance of conduct and devise a code of morals for our guidance. In doing this we make use of reason to supplement our deepest guides, the intuitions.

Intuition I have made the source of my philosophy, according the reason a secondary place. I have done this for the reason that our intuitions seem to lie closer to the vital principle of life than does the intellect. One school of philosophy supports such an assumption, and, even did it not, I must still do as I have done, for all other methods lead me into worse perplexities than does this

method. The reason is, however, of fundamental assistance in the process of discriminating between true intuitions and false, and in determining which of two conflicting intuitions should be followed. It is a tool which, rightly guided, leads to a mastery of life. Without it we should be but the victims of impulse, and in the ceaseless clash of impulses in the conduct of life we should be constantly at a loss.

The two purposes of existence as I have conceived them are to make life more intense and vital in the individual, who seeks a deeper experience, a truer sense of being alive; and to bring about a realization of self through the cultivation of latent powers, the infinite development of possibilities. It is perhaps misleading to speak of a goal for life if no goal is ever attained. Life is a trend only, a development in a certain direction expressive of the impelling force back of it. It is our business to discover this trend, that we may not run counter to it, but may accelerate the very life process itself.

The development of self is twofold, individual and communal. Self-expression demands that the individual help others as well as himself, for if he does not his own growth is stunted. On the other hand, if he disregards the possibilities of his own growth the possibilities of his assistance to others are lessened. The two, self-expression and altruism, are complementary forces, and the world grows through their inevitable conflict. It is im-

possible to conceive of life without them. Life would either fall to pieces, like the universe if not held in the bonds of attractive forces, or it would cease to move, and as a static thing would cease to be life at all.

From the terms which I have laid down, the only inference to be drawn is that life is a constantly increasing complexity of individual parts expressive of a fundamental unity. This unity and the life force which dominates it we call God. Him I am unable to think of as other than a personality, the sum, I take it, of all the lesser individualities of this and other worlds. And because he is the sum of these he is greater than all of them, for in the realm of the intellect, the emotions and the spirit the laws of matter do not altogether hold, and the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Yet God, this unified, conscious and vital force is not a perfected whole, but, like the individuals of which he is made up, is an unsatisfied and ever-evolving being, seeking to fulfil himself ever more multifariously and to feel his own existence more keenly by pouring his being into richer and more intense forms of life. We must reason from our own lives to that of God, must think of him as ourselves upon a vaster scale. We cannot understand him wholly in so doing, but we can grow toward him. More than this, we can help him, for we are literally a part of him, and as we realize his purpose in us we help him in his task. Only as we do this do we

attain happiness and contentment, which lie in the realization of self and in the expression of life's purposes in us.

The problem of immortality looks for its answer to our conception of God and life's purpose. If it is the aim of being to create new and ever more vital creatures, it must be the purpose of life to conserve what has been so painfully achieved. The perpetuation of the individual in so far as he has become something different from every one else and is something which the world cannot do without unless it is to lose what it has laboriously won, becomes, then, an end of life. Life would be wasteful did it not perpetuate personality. Yet it does not follow with certainty that life can accomplish its desire. I incline to believe, therefore, that immortality, like all desirable things, must be won through effort. Unless we have proved ourselves worthy of life, how can we find in ourselves sufficient vitality to persist? If immortality must be earned, so, too, the failure to strive may lead to the slow disintegration of personality and its subsidence into the matter of which it is made. The possibility of immortality seems to imply its opposite, annihilation, or at least the recreation of the individual soul, as a flawed casting may be remoulded free of its original defects. But no man can say that another has no worth in him and is lost to hope. This a greater mind must determine.

Problems of conduct and the construction of a

moral code grow likewise from our conception of God and the necessity for exerting effort. The two vital ends are self-realization and altruism. Those acts and tendencies which stunt and deform life are immoral. Those that lead to its finer realization are moral. Conventional codes are always deficient because they are the product of inheritance, the results of other needs; our morals, growing as life grows, must change constantly to meet the new demands which life exacts of us. It is our duty to examine our principles and to see with ever greater clearness their relation to the problems of our immediate existence and the attainment of our ideals. There is always a clash of individual aims and social aims, of individual realization and altruism. Out of the pull of these opposing forces arises our morality, the adjustment of our lives to the world in which we live. In so far as we are apathetic and accept life without a conscious reaction to it we but blunder along, not making proper use of the intelligence with which we are endowed.

The function of literature is twofold and springs logically from our previous conceptions. Literature presents us problems of conduct, leads us to see their significance, and trains our minds to accept the better course when torn between conflicting impulses. It does more than this when it aids us, too, to enjoy life more keenly, to relish its flavor, and to become thus more truly sentient beings with individual souls.

The merit of these beliefs, whatever their defects, is that they call all of our powers into play. The acceptance of them demands an active, not a passive, existence. They are in accord, I think, with our changing world; they emphasize the importance of conduct, and they provide a place for the reason. Because life changes constantly, they make provision in themselves for changes in human beliefs. They do not depend upon a limited truth already realized, but upon one which, though imperfect, can be more and more understood as we grow. We have our part in the creation of this truth, and thus the individual finds in his own littleness and insignificance something which has a high and eternal dignity. He is of use to God, even as God is necessary to him.